




3 1761 11630715 8





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2023 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761116307158>











No. 8A



N° 8A

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

Monday 24 October 2005

Lundi 24 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers





### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.





## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 24 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 24 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.*

*Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### THOMAS TSUBOUCHI

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** I rise today on behalf of all members of this House to express our heartfelt sympathies to the Honourable David Tsubouchi, his sister Lynne, his brother Dan and their families concerning the tragic death of their 83-year-old father, Thomas, on Friday morning.

Thomas Tsubouchi was crossing Huntingwood Drive at Dibgate Boulevard on Friday when he was struck by a motor vehicle. What makes this incident so horrible is that the driver failed to stop. I understand that Mr. Tsubouchi was still alive after he was hit, but the driver left the scene and failed to administer any type of aid.

In spite of this horrible crime, David Tsubouchi has been particularly thoughtful in his public comments and has been careful not to be too harsh on the driver. As such, we would ask anyone who knows anything about this terrible tragedy to come forward, do the right thing and call your local police.

I spoke with David earlier today to express our sympathies. He served with distinction in this Legislature from 1995 to 2003 as the MPP for Markham and as Minister of Community and Social Services, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Solicitor General, Minister of Culture and Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet.

As John Tory said, Mr. Tsubouchi was a hero: "He was one of many Japanese Canadians who were wrongly interned during the Second World War. He persevered and was an excellent mentor, father and friend."

Again, our sympathies are with the Tsubouchi family today during this difficult time in their lives.

#### LUPUS DISEASE

**Mr. Kim Craitor (Niagara Falls):** October is Lupus Awareness Month, and I'm pleased to make the following comments on behalf of the Lupus Foundation of Ontario.

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that affects one out of every 185 people. It can affect people of different races and ages, and it can affect men, women

and children of all ages. Simply put, we can all be affected by lupus.

Lupus is different for everyone who has it. It can involve the joints, skin, kidneys, lungs, heart, brain, central nervous system, blood and more. Common signs of lupus are rashes, swollen joints, fever, chest pains, swollen glands, extreme fatigue, hair loss, sun sensitivity, low blood count, memory problems, seizures and kidney problems. There is no definitive cause for lupus and there is no cure. In extreme cases, the disease may become fatal.

Mr. Speaker and members of the House, I invite you to join with communities throughout Ontario, throughout Canada and indeed throughout all the world to recognize that October is Lupus Awareness Month, in order to help bring awareness to a little-known disease that affects so many of our citizens.

#### VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I rise today to recognize some special residents who volunteer their time in my beautiful riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Gord Dawes was recognized as Ontario's snowmobile trail officer patrol Officer of the Year. Gord Dawes has served 10 years as a volunteer patrolling the 4,000 kilometres of snowmobile trails in Muskoka. The award was presented by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs. Without Gord Dawes, there wouldn't be a STOP program in Muskoka region. He is responsible for organizing meetings, patrolling trails and assisting with training for the other STOP officers. STOP volunteers are sworn in as special constables by the OPP and help to make sure that riders respect the laws of the trail and make trails safer in general for all those who enjoy riding. Congratulations, Gord.

I would also like to recognize a few local volunteers from the United Senior Citizens of Ontario Inc. who last week were presented with the Ontario Volunteer Service Award: Mrs. May Snell for 15 years, Mrs. Grace Gibson for her 20 years of service, Mr. John McNicoll for 20 years, Mrs. Lorene Ross for 25 years and Mrs. Gwen McCormack for 25 years of service. Also recognized was Mr. Gordon Snell for his 25 years of volunteerism. Sadly, Mr. Snell died before he could receive this honour. Mr. Snell was also a former mayor of the town of Huntsville.

Congratulations to these and to all the other volunteers in the communities of Parry Sound–Muskoka. I thank all of you for your dedication and service to others.



## BY-ELECTION IN SCARBOROUGH-ROUGE RIVER

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I wanted to rise today to talk about a mystery that's worthy of Sherlock Holmes. In fact, people might ask, "What is that mystery?" That mystery is the frequently asked question that's coming at the door as our candidate in Scarborough-Rouge River, Sheila White, is knocking—and she's receiving phenomenal support there. The question that she keeps getting as she knocks on those doors in Scarborough-Rouge River is, "When will the McGuinty Liberals call the Scarborough-Rouge River by-election, and why is there such a delay?"

Before the last election, Dalton McGuinty said, "Elections used to be designed to foster public participation. Now the timing and rules are cynically manipulated to reduce turnout and minimize exposure of the government's record.... It's time to put the silly guessing game behind us once and for all."

Premier, put the guessing behind us now and announce the date of the by-election for Scarborough-Rouge River. You promised to end the "silly guessing game." Now the people of Scarborough-Rouge River are guessing that you're too scared to call the election. Meanwhile, they are very enthusiastic about our NDP candidate, Sheila White. She was endorsed, in fact, by Alvin Curling when he was an MPP, and the voters of Scarborough-Rouge River are ready to give her a similar strong endorsement.

The McGuinty Liberals have lost the public trust, and the people of Scarborough-Rouge River want to elect Sheila White to send them a message. Stop breaking your promises; stop taking the voters of Scarborough-Rouge River for granted. Dalton, call the by-election and have the courage to face the voters in Scarborough-Rouge River.

## FOIRE D'INFORMATION D'EMBRUN

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Le 4 octobre dernier, j'ai eu le grand plaisir d'assister à la foire d'information d'Embrun intitulée La vie active... C'est pour la vie. Parrainée par la FAFO, la fédération des aînés franco-ontariens, c'était une première pour la région de Prescott-Russell qui fut grandement appréciée par plus de 350 francophones présents.

Il s'agissait d'une journée entièrement axée sur des informations pour les personnes de 50 ans et plus. Il y a eu des ateliers, des kiosques d'information et des conférences sur tous les sujets susceptibles d'intéresser les gens de 50 ans et plus, tels que des informations d'ordre légal comme les procurations, ainsi que l'importance de la forme physique et l'utilisation sécuritaire des médicaments.

Je félicite les organisateurs pour leur bel esprit d'équipe et de partenariat qui ont fait de l'événement un franc succès. Je tiens à remercier tous les partenaires de cette foire : la FAFO régionale de l'est, présidée par

Fleurette Lalande et son secrétaire, Edgar Pommerville; le Secrétariat aux affaires des personnes âgées; le Club Joie de Vivre 50+ d'Embrun, sous la présidence de Cécile Desjardins; et le Bureau de santé de l'est de l'Ontario. Félicitations à tous les organisateurs. J'attends avec anticipation la foire d'information des années à venir.

1340

## PROPOSED WOODSTOCK HOSPITAL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** Last week I had the pleasure of showing our leader around my riding of Oxford. Not only did we have the pleasure of introducing John to the great people of Oxford, but he was invited to speak to the members of the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce at lunch.

After lunch, I drove John to the site where the new Woodstock hospital is supposed to be located—a hospital that the McGuinty Liberals continue to ignore; a hospital for which the McGuinty Liberals won't put pen to paper and give final approval.

In December 2000, former Minister of Health Elizabeth Witmer announced that a new hospital would be built to serve Oxford county. In October 2001, the Woodstock Hospital Foundation submitted the functional program and, upon its approval, began the master planning. Working drawings, including pre-tender cost estimates, were submitted to the ministry for approval in December 2003. Now, almost two years later, the project is still waiting for permission from the provincial government to go to tender.

In June 2005, it was announced that a new Toyota assembly plant would be locating in Woodstock. The addition of the new Toyota plant will increase demand on the already strained resources of the current hospital in Woodstock.

It's time for the McGuinty Liberals to stop stalling and get shovels in the ground soon for the sake of the patients and health care in Oxford county. It is unacceptable that a project that was first announced five years ago has yet to get permission from the McGuinty Liberal government to go to tender.

Community leaders, hospital officials and volunteers have worked hard to meet their end of the deal. When is this government going to honour their end of the deal?

## ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I was very fortunate and honoured to be in Barrie on Saturday at the Allergy/Asthma Information Association expo to talk about the bill we passed unanimously in the House last May, called Sabrina's Law. When we passed the bill, there were parents, schoolchildren and champions of anaphylactic students here to watch us enshrine much-needed protection into law.

In Barrie I met with parents, teachers and, most importantly, tons of students who spend a great deal of



time worrying about exposure to allergens. It was a very moving experience, and I saw and heard first-hand the impression and the impact we have had in this House for all of the people around Ontario. I saw the good that government can do when we act in the best interests of our children, and people pointed that out to us.

As you know, I've championed issues that help protect students, and Sabrina's Law does just that. We have asked school boards, principals, school staff and parents to be prepared for emergency situations involving anaphylactic students. Thanks to Sabrina's Law, they would, and should be, in every school across the province.

The people I saw on Saturday live with the worry that even the smallest amount of a food particle could harm or even kill a loved one. Although parents and students still must be vigilant, we have all helped to make our schools safe for anaphylactic students.

One of the biggest comments that was made in that one-day event was how proud they were of the legislators that unanimous consent was given in first, second and third readings. We should all be very proud.

#### EVENTS IN HAMILTON

#### ÉVÉNEMENTS DIVERS À HAMILTON

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I rise in the House today to announce some great news for Hamilton West. This past Friday, the Ministry of the Attorney General provided grants to three separate organizations in downtown Hamilton through the community grants program. These funds will go toward projects that assist and support victims of crime.

Last week, I had the pleasure of announcing funding of \$31,934 to the Planned Parenthood Society of Hamilton to help launch a community outreach project to assist victims of sexual-orientation hate crimes. Planned Parenthood is a wonderful organization that supports healthy sexual activity and reproduction by providing confidential assistance to youth on a walk-in basis.

Wesley Urban Ministries Inc., which celebrated their 50th anniversary on Sunday, is an organization that provides shelter and services for street youth, the homeless and the unemployed in downtown Hamilton. They will receive \$21,673 for a counselling program for homeless female youth across our city.

Finalement, le Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton-Wentworth-Niagara va recevoir 50 000 \$ pour développer un programme pour les enfants qui ont eu l'expérience de la violence domestique dans la communauté francophone à Hamilton. Le programme va assister à l'éducation des enfants au sujet de la violence ainsi qu'offrir des conseils pour les petites victimes.

We in Hamilton West are so proud of our city, and our priority is ensuring the safety of the people in our community. These grants will help to provide assistance for the homeless, for victims of abuse and crime—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### HURRICANE RELIEF

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I rise to tell the members of this House about a tremendous achievement accomplished through communal effort by the citizens in my riding.

As you know, less than two months ago Hurricane Katrina devastated the coastal regions of Louisiana and Mississippi. While many of us were talking about the damage and wondering what could be done, communities and businesses in the Bay of Quinte area began to act. It started with Max Haggarty donating a transport and driver to carry a load of relief supplies to the coast, and it snowballed. In total, the people of Prince Edward-Hastings donated almost \$30,000 and shipped 150,000 bottles of water to Red Cross kitchen number 19 in Slidell, Louisiana.

I would especially like to thank ITS Transportation, Gary Cooney of Cooney Transport, Canadian Tire and CN Rail for donating equipment and drivers to take our donations south, and the brewers' alliance for financial assistance toward transportation costs. I would like to thank Sheila Barry and John Considine at the US embassy in Ottawa for their assistance with all the paperwork. Chief Inspector Gary Musser and Superintendent Al Mason were extraordinarily helpful with border crossings. And Paula Burke at Culligan was patient, accommodating our ever-increasing need for water from Culligan. Thanks to the Royal Bank in Belleville for administering the money, and thanks to Laura, Dave and Brian of my staff for their commitment, energy and enthusiasm for this project.

Businesses donated pallets of water, and senior citizens' groups held euchre parties to raise money. Churches took up special collections. Municipalities, school boards, Loyalist College, local unions—donations came from every part of our community. I'm proud of the hundreds of people who came together to help our neighbours to the south, and I thank them on behalf of this Legislature.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, pursuant to standing order 109(b).

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Hardeman:** No, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to standing order 109(b), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.



## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### GAS PRICE WATCHDOG ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 SUR L'AGENT DE SURVEILLANCE DES PRIX DU CARBURANT

Mr. Gravelle moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 10, An Act respecting the price of motor vehicle fuel and the appointment of a Gas Price Watchdog /  
Projet de loi 10, Loi concernant le prix du carburant pour véhicules automobiles et la nomination d'un agent de surveillance des prix du carburant.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** I believe strongly that consumers deserve to know what is a fair and justifiable price to pay for gasoline at the pump. Indeed, I'm convinced that if consumers knew what that fair price was, they would accept it. Today, that situation does not exist. This legislation would change that.

The establishment of a gas price watchdog with legislative bite would ensure that companies would have to justify their price structure and would no longer be able to gouge the public.

This is reasonable legislation that I hope secures the support of this House and, more specifically, the support of our government as we strive to eliminate the discrepancies that exist now, such as the price in Toronto of 86 cents a litre yesterday compared with \$1.02 a litre in Thunder Bay, a discrepancy that should not exist.

## VISITORS

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to recognize that we have some very special guests from Niagara Falls: Professor Rick Gay from Kingston College and a number of students from China who are studying political science and have taken the time to be here in the House. They are Mike, Randy, Nick, Bill and John.

On behalf of everyone here in the House, I'd like to compliment you for taking the time to come to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** That, of course, was not a point of order.

We welcome you very much to our proceedings.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move that, notwithstanding order 96(d), the following changes be made to the ballot list of private members' public business: Mr. Kormos and Ms. Churley exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr. Kormos assumes ballot item 61 and Ms. Churley assumes ballot item 4; Mr. Ouellette and Mr. Wilson exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr. Ouellette assumes ballot item 62 and Mr. Wilson assumes ballot item 7; and Ms. Munro and Mr. Baird exchange places in order of precedence such that Ms. Munro assumes ballot item 44 and Mr. Baird assumes ballot item 14.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Bradley has moved that, notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following changes be made to the ballot list of private members' public business: Mr. Kormos and Ms. Churley exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr. Kormos assumes ballot item 61—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker:** Dispense? Dispensed.

Shall the motion carry? Carried.

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, October 24, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 8. Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Racco, Mario G.
Baird, John R.	Gravelle, Michael	Ramal, Khalil
Bartolucci, Rick	Hardeman, Ernie	Ramsay, David
Bentley, Christopher	Hoy, Pat	Rinaldi, Lou
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hudak, Tim	Runciman, Robert W.
Bountrogianni, Marie	Jackson, Cameron	Ruprecht, Tony
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Bryant, Michael	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smith, Monique
Cansfield, Donna H.	Leal, Jeff	Smitherman, George
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Marsales, Judy	Sterling, Norman W.
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Craiton, Kim	McMeekin, Ted	Tory, John
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilkinson, John
Di Cocco, Caroline	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Dombrowsky, Leona	Munro, Julia	Wong, Tony C.
Duguid, Brad	Parsons, Ernie	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duncan, Dwight	Peters, Steve	Yakubski, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Phillips, Gerry	Zimmer, David
Fonseca, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra	



**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Churley, Marilyn  
Horwath, Andrea

Kormos, Peter  
Marchese, Rosario  
Martel, Shelley  
Murdoch, Bill

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 62; the nays are 10.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Once again, I have the pleasure of rising in this House to share more good news. Earlier today, the Premier and I had the privilege of being part of a remarkable and important event: the launch of the government of Ontario's wait times Web site. Here in this chamber we often hear calls for greater accountability and greater transparency. We often hear calls for reliable, up-to-date information. Well, we've delivered. The Web site which the Premier and I helped launch today does all of this and more.

As we all know, wait times are one of the crucial yardsticks by which we measure how well our health care system is performing, but until now we did not have accurate information on wait times. I know this will come as something of a shock to members of this assembly, because it came as a shock to me, but when we took office just over two years ago, the health care system we inherited did not compile this data. If you wanted to know what the waiting time was for a certain procedure at your local hospital, you just could not find out. Obviously, this made it very difficult to make intelligent decisions about your care or the care of a loved one, because the information simply didn't exist. We knew wait times were bad, but no one knew, not even hospitals, just how bad. I'm not sure how things slipped to such a state. Some other members may have some insight into this. Instead of pointing fingers and dishing out blame, we rolled up our sleeves and we set out to fix it, and fix it we did.

As you know, our government set out to shorten wait times in five critical areas. We've already funded almost 240,000 additional procedures—nearly a quarter of a million. Just one example: Since we launched our wait times strategy, 42% more MRI procedures have been delivered in Ontario. These investments, these additional procedures, are contributing to shorter wait times and are making an enormous difference in the lives of thousands of Ontarians.

But in order to shorten wait times, we knew that we had to do more than just fund additional procedures.

That's not the whole answer. We also have to work smarter. We have to identify problems and bottlenecks in the system. We have to make decisions based on the most reliable, up-to-date information. And we have to allow patients and their families to do the same: to make decisions based on accurate and timely information.

This Web site, available to all Ontarians, does exactly that. It provides all Ontarians, patients and physicians, with information about actual wait times in their communities at the local hospital, broken down by procedure and broken down by local health integration network.

We know that some of the most stressful decisions we make are about the health care of our loved ones and ourselves, and this Web site helps to remove some of the guesswork. For others in the health care system, whether they be doctors, hospital administrators or ministry staff, the data on this Web site is equally instructive and valuable. We can manage the wait times more effectively because we have accurate information to work with. By making this information public, we're introducing a degree of transparency and accountability that will have an immediate and positive effect on the entire health care system. Because this information is broken down by local health integration network, hospitals within each LHIN will be able to better share the wait times burden. This is precisely what local health integration networks are designed to foster.

I'd also like to take a moment to remind all members that on the issue of wait times, this government is way, way ahead of the field. We didn't sit here and have someone tell us that wait times were a problem; we identified this as a problem long before the last election campaign, and our leader ran on a promise to shorten wait times.

Today, Ontario is a leader on the issue of wait times. I had the opportunity to meet with my federal, provincial and territorial colleagues this past weekend, and I can tell you that every one of them has seen the progress that we've made in Ontario as a model for how to get things done.

The launch of this Web site is both an important milestone and a crucial turning point for health care in Ontario, and I am very proud to rise in my place to congratulate and to thank our Premier for helping to make it a reality.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** The much-publicized launch of the Web site list today was a major disappointment to people in the province of Ontario, who thought that it would actually reduce wait times. This announcement today was a blatant attempt by the Liberal government to divert attention from the fact that they have no plan and that they have broken their election promise to reduce wait times. Rather than improving access to care and reducing wait times, this government is simply looking at new ways to fool people into thinking that change is happening. The Web site highlights a problem that we all know exists, but doesn't offer even as much as a band-aid solution.



Providing access to wait lists does not equal improving access to care, nor does it improve care or provide one more space for treatment. In reality, we all know that people are waiting longer and they are paying more in taxes. The longer wait times were confirmed last week by the Fraser Institute, which stated that median wait times for the province increased from 7.1 weeks in 2003 to 8.7 weeks in 2005. In fact, Ontarians suffered one of the largest jumps in wait times in Canada, with an average five-and-a-half days longer to receive needed care than in the previous year, despite the fact that other provinces were showing improvements.

Today's announcement does not take into account that many of the individuals in need of this information are seniors who do not have access to a computer or the Internet, or who understand how to use them. This information also does not help the person who does not have access to a family physician.

Indeed, let's deal with the issue of access to family doctors: When I looked at the Ministry of Health Web site today, I noticed that the number of communities that were designated as underserved has actually increased from June of 2003. Instead of 34 communities being underserved, we now have 37 in the north; instead of 92 in the south, we now have 102. What use is this Web site to patients in Ontario who cannot access a family doctor?

This decrease in the number of doctors and increase in underserved areas has all come about during the Liberal watch. Furthermore, without a plan to address the shortage of doctors and nurses who can perform the procedures as well as the necessary follow-up, and capital investments in hospitals for additional operating rooms, these wait times will continue to increase.

I was disappointed to see that the data on the Web site is incomplete, and I was surprised that not all hospitals had provided the data. Furthermore, this data provides only a part of the picture; it fails to show the wait time from the time you go to your family physician to the procedure. Today's announcement provides no hope for goals or access targets to indicate how quickly the wait times are going to be reduced. In fact, I want to quote from the OMA this morning, who were also expressing some disappointment. Dr. Flynn said, "I'm concerned about my members"—meaning the doctors—"and the extra onus that's going to be placing on family doctors to hunt for a place that's acceptable for all parties to have the work done."

1410

This announcement today offers no process as to how people can access these procedures in other communities. However, it does add to the workload of family physicians and specialists instead of allowing them that time to provide care for their patients. In fact, he also said that if you're not one of the priority areas—I mean, we're still in a constrained system. Nothing that has happened today or yesterday has made for more anaesthetists. Nothing that has happened today or yesterday has created more diagnostic radiologists.

I think we can see that the announcement today is not going to decrease wait times. In fact, they have increased by five and a half days in the last year. It is not going to improve access unless we have more doctors and nurses, and we now know that under the Liberal watch the number of underserved areas has actually increased.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** The government announcement today was more about spin than substance, and you only have to look the Web site to see that. The OHA reports that there are 211 hospitals in the province, but only 74 are specifically required to list their wait times. It seems that those 74 were chosen because they got some additional money this year to do additional procedures, which is interesting, as there are other Ontario hospitals that carry out these procedures too. But since they didn't get any additional funding, they're not required to be on the Web site. You have to ask the government, why aren't they included? Don't they have wait lists too? If the purpose of the exercise—and the government seems to suggest that it is—is that you're trying to get to the hospital with the shortest wait time to get your procedure done, why don't these hospitals factor into the equation too?

Secondly, of those required that were required to report this morning, a number failed to do so on one or more wait times. Those hospitals included London Health Sciences Centre, Lakeridge, South Muskoka and Princess Margaret. It's hard to imagine why this wasn't done before the grand unveiling. It's interesting to ask what the government is going to do when some of these hospitals that should have reported by the grand unveiling of the Web site didn't even report on those wait times that they were required to.

Thirdly, the Web site is only accessible or searchable not by hospital; you have to do it by postal code or by city or town. It's not very user friendly either for consumers or for doctors. I think the reality is that most people aren't going to bother to get on it.

Let's deal with some of the issues regarding wait times themselves.

First, the government wants to leave the impression that people are going to get on the Web site, look for the hospital with the shortest wait list, go the doctor to get a referral and go to that hospital, and they're going to get it done no matter where it is in Ontario. It's highly unlikely that most patients are even going to bother to take a look at it. Most of those people very much trust their family doctor. They have an intimate relationship with their family doctor, and they believe that if a serious medical situation exists, their family doctor will do something about that. If there's a serious problem, their family doctor is going to refer them to the place where they can get that procedure done in the quickest time. I don't think you're going to see a lot of change. Because so many people are so comfortable with that relationship, they're not going to question it.

Secondly, for those who do take a look to see that there might be a short time somewhere else, they're going to approach their family doctor for an opinion. A lot of family physicians already have a relationship with



specialists in their own community whom they are very comfortable with. I think many of them are going to be concerned about referring their patient, perhaps an elderly, frail patient, to a specialist they don't know, in a community they know nothing about, to a hospital they know nothing about. I don't think that most family doctors are going to do that. They're going to want to be sure that they themselves have some kind of relationship with the specialist they're going to refer their patients to. It was Dr. Flynn who raised that concern this morning, and I think it's a legitimate one.

Thirdly, for those who go on-site, discuss it with their family doctor, get a referral and then decide to go somewhere else, it's interesting that the government has very clearly said that they're not going to pay for people to travel somewhere else to get their procedure done more quickly; the minister's own political staff said that. You need to know, Speaker, that that also includes northern Ontario. Even if the northern Ontario travel grant is in existence, if there is a doctor in your community who can undertake that procedure, you can't qualify to go somewhere else either in the north, or out of the north to the south. I think that if people have to pay out of their own pocket to travel, for accommodation, for family to be there with them and there's no government funding for that, they're not going to go.

Finally, I think Dr. Rachlis said it correctly when he told the *Toronto Star* on October 17 that "the 'biggest problem' is the shortage of doctors and nurses to handle patients, not so much where they're doing the treatment. 'We just don't have enough of the specialists or the nursing people that are involved in the system,' Rachlis told the *Toronto Star*.

"And with the aging population and the aging health caregivers in our population, things are going to get worse."

It's interesting that the minister had nothing to say about the serious problem that this province, like so many others, is not going to meet the commitment it made to establish benchmarks for wait times by December 2005. It's very clear that the federal government gave \$41 billion to the provinces on condition that some of them would meet some of the commitments they had signed on to. One of those commitments was to have scientifically based benchmarks in place for a number of procedures by this December. You only have to read the paper and see the weasel words of the federal minister and our very own minister to know that this government is not going to meet its commitment. You've got the money; why don't you meet the promise that you set when you signed on to the accord last September?

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### MINISTERS' EXPENSES

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. Given your admission on

Friday that your Minister of Finance broke the rules by funnelling his expenses through the civil service, what canvass have you and your staff done so that you can guarantee that no other members of your cabinet have broken these rules?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm pleased to have the question and to inform the House that, further to my opportunity to speak with members of the media on Friday last, I had the opportunity to speak with our Minister of Government Services, Gerry Phillips, and we have, under his auspices, sent a clarification to all of our ministers to improve the system that is already in place and to make it perfectly clear that if it's not practical for a minister to file a claim on his or her own and somebody else ends up paying for it, then it's important that that be brought to the attention of the Integrity Commissioner. That's the point of clarification that was made by the Minister of Government Services, and I think that was the fair and reasonable thing to do in the circumstances.

**Mr. Tory:** I say to the Premier, this is a fairly basic issue about your standards, about following the rules and about respect for the taxpayers' money. I can't imagine what would make it impractical for a minister to pay for an event that that minister is hosting. It's fairly commonplace in the private sector that the most senior person present at an event would pay, precisely so that you can't have people who are putting expenses through who are not then captured by the system.

Information that we already have shows that another minister, your Minister of Economic Development, had a \$1,000 dinner in Stuttgart and a \$1,300 lunch in Milan which were put through a civil servant expense account, which is against the rules and escapes the examination of those expenses by the Integrity Commissioner.

We have today filed freedom of information requests for all expenses related to all trips taken by your ministers. Since we know the rules were broken and we have the right to know how broadly, will you save us the trouble of going through that seven-month process and simply make all those expense returns public right now?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I've made it clear, and we've formalized that now by a point of clarification that has been distributed to all ministers and their staff. I'll read that so that the leader of the official opposition understands exactly what we've done. It says:

"Ministers will disclose an allowable expense incurred by them or on their behalf with the Integrity Commissioner.

"While it is preferable, wherever possible, for ministers to pay allowable expenses themselves, if it is not practical for a minister to pay for an allowable expense, the minister shall note the expense on his or her claim form and shall include a copy of the receipt indicating that the expense has been claimed by another individual."

I think that is what is fair and reasonable. The member opposite may indicate that somehow he wouldn't otherwise have found out about this expense, but the fact is you did find out about it. All expenses connected with



that particular lunch became apparent through your FOI request, so it was there. What we're really talking about is making sure it's properly noted.

1420

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier's last comment is actually very helpful, because we did have to make the FOI request and we did have to wait, in the case of your Minister of Finance, seven months to get the information in question. So since today is the day for Web sites, I would like to ask you if you would agree to go one step further than this clarification that you've put in place and agree to meet the standard they've had in Ottawa for some time, which is that all ministers' expenses are posted online every three months. Will you agree to meet that standard and move to that level of transparency and disclosure so we don't have to ask for this stuff and wait seven months for it?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** What we're talking about here is a Conservative government bill: the Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expenses Review and Accountability Act, 2002. It's a fairly fresh piece of legislation. It has become apparent to me that it required further clarification. That is exactly what we have done. We are building on a foundation which is relatively recent. We think it makes good sense to move forward with this clarification, and that's what I've done.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I don't know why we couldn't take the technology we're using for Web sites, which I'm going to ask about now, and use it for expenses.

My question is for the Premier. In your last election platform, you made the following promise, one of many: "We will begin by setting and meeting standards for cardiac care, cancer care, total joint replacement and MRI/CT scans."

On what date can we expect those goals or standards, as you promised, to ensure that patients are receiving timely care?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'll just take the opportunity at the outset to congratulate the Minister of Health and everybody involved in our public health care system for helping us to collect information which has never been collected before in our province and to make that information public for all Ontarians. It has never been collected before.

In keeping with an agreement reached this weekend at a meeting attended by the Minister of Health, benchmarks will be established in common by all the Ministers of Health by year-end. Then, beyond that, individual provinces and territories will establish their own particular targets, which will be milestones along the way to achieving those benchmarks. I expect all of that will happen before year-end.

**Mr. Tory:** In fact, the Cardiac Care Network, Cancer Care Ontario and the Ontario joint replacement registry,

which you shut down, were already measuring wait times independently. Premier, the Ontario Medical Association president, Dr. Gregory Flynn, said your announcement today, while an attempt to provide information, does little to address patient care. In fact, he said that the wait times Web site "tells us there are wide variations between institutions, wide variations in wait lists. And it's surprising that there are some fairly significant institutions that have not reported their wait list data. Having the information [doesn't create] another anaesthesiologist; [it] doesn't open another operating room."

My question is this: What process did you announce this morning so people could act on the information they see on the Web site and actually go somewhere and get a procedure done in a shorter time, which then might actually go an inch toward meeting your promise of reducing wait times? That's what you said you would do.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I can tell you, and I know the leader of the official opposition knows this, that you can't manage what you can't measure. For the first time, we are collecting this information. Beyond that—it's been said so often that it verges on the trite, but the fact of the matter is, it's true—information is power. Doctors and patients now have access to reliable, recent data. ICES, for example, produces data. The last round of data they collected predates our government. That's how old that was.

This comes from July of this year. We intend to update this on a bi-monthly basis. This enables patients and, in particular, their family doctors to sit down together and make an informed decision about where they want to proceed with a further procedure that requires the assistance of a specialist. It's the beginning. We expect, and we know for a fact, that we'll be able to make marked improvement as we move forward, and we're very much looking forward to the next rollout of new data.

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier's government shut down the independent wait times registry that monitored joint replacements, including hips and knees. You changed the wait time definitions for a lot of these procedures by cutting out the time that it takes for a patient to see a specialist in the first place, and this is often the longest time of all.

I'm informed there is absolutely no process in place to make use of this wait time information, and furthermore, that with the exception of what are called unlikely instances of professional courtesy, someone calling from one city to another after that chat with their family doctor won't be able to get the procedure done in the time stated on the Web site.

Mr. Premier, you had the words "Reduce wait times" behind you this morning; those were the words that were behind you this morning. What specifically will this Web site do to help patients to reduce their wait times? What process will they follow?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Let me tell you that we've already funded 240,000 more procedures in those five targeted areas. What we're going to demonstrate over



time—and it's something that no other government was prepared to take on, because they were, frankly, afraid of linking themselves directly to measurable progress. Nobody over there ever even suggested that they should take that on before, and we've embraced that.

Let me tell you about some of the things that have already been said in terms of wait times:

From Dr. Robert Bell of Princess Margaret Hospital: "What would have been an eight- to 10-week wait for cancer surgery, wait for MRI scan and wait for an initial consultation and diagnosis has been reduced to less than three weeks."

"The current waiting time of three months for outpatient elective scans will be eliminated"—that from Julia Dumanian, CEO of Cambridge Memorial Hospital.

We are now running MRIs at times of the day when they were never, ever run before. It's remarkable what you can do when you commit yourself to getting the job done, and we're doing it.

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier, and it concerns the health of a remote First Nations community. I think the situation is a disgrace, but I want to know what the Premier thinks. This is an Ontario community where the drinking water contains sewer water, where the tap water is giving children skin and stomach diseases, and where their water quality problems have become so desperate that residents are forced to beg for assistance. That's the situation today at Kashechewan, which is a remote First Nation in northern Ontario. Two years ago, the Ontario Clean Water Agency issued this report warning that the situation there is a Walkerton in waiting.

Premier, can you explain what your government did with this report from the Ontario Clean Water Agency? And have you done anything to address the water quality problems in this community?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The leader of the NDP raises an important issue, and I fully support the sentiment expressed in that. We have a real challenge on our hands. More importantly, the people in that community have some real challenges that they are grappling with.

I can say that the Minister of the Environment, Laurel Broten, as did her predecessor, Leona Dombrowsky, has written to the federal government saying that we stand at the ready, that we are prepared to assist in whatever capacity we might be called upon to do so. The leader of the NDP knows that the reserve is the subject of federal jurisdiction. I can say that the Minister of Natural Resources was also in touch with his counterpart on Parliament Hill earlier today.

Again, I will repeat this government's commitment in this House, one that's been made directly to the federal government: We stand at the ready and we're willing to assist in whatever way we're called upon to do so.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the citizens of this First Nation are citizens of Ontario. This is a report of your

agency, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, which says that this is another Walkerton in waiting. It says that the water is drawn from ditches and sewage lagoons. It says that they are forced to patch equipment that doesn't work with electrical tape, that they have meters and gauges that are broken. We know that there's E. coli in the water so bad that doctors are urging total evacuation of the community. You're saying that the sum total of your government's response was to write a letter to the federal government?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Natural Resources.

1430

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I would remind the member that even Justice O'Connor, when this particular segment came up under those deliberations in the Walkerton inquiry, had stated that water is a federal jurisdiction when it comes to reserves. But we are very concerned, and no Ontarian should have to put up with such Third World conditions. Quite frankly, I am personally disgusted by the situation in that community, as is this government.

I have been in contact with Andy Scott, the federal Minister of Indian and Native Affairs. I've told him of my concern about this and have asked him to take immediate action, and that if Health Canada declares this an emergency, Ontario is prepared to carry out an evacuation immediately.

**Mr. Hampton:** I want to point out that the school is now closed in the community because the water is so contaminated. A physician who has visited there found skin lesions on children because of skin infections related to how bad the water is. Your government has had no trouble visiting the community: A year ago, the Minister of Health was there to visit. He saw how bad it was. He was there long enough to make some promises, none of which have been fulfilled. Six months ago, your Minister of Community Safety was there. He said that the situation was deplorable. But I want to know, Premier: Has your government done anything—done one thing—other than write a letter to your federal cousins?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** We have a big interest in this. In fact, ministers of the crown visited the community over this year. Again, I want to reiterate what the Premier has said, that the Ministry of the Environment has stepped up and said, "We are offering all the technical assistance that we have at our disposal in Ontario." It is up to INAC to authorize that and work in partnership with us, as it is under federal jurisdiction—and that's the problem here—but we are prepared to step up to the plate. I said to the minister, "I want you to make a decision as soon as possible on this, because we're prepared to act," and we need that authority from the federal government to do that.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. I think we know the story:



You've written a letter to the federal government; that's about it.

Premier, before the last election, you railed against governments using partisan self-promotion paid for with tax dollars. But today, with much fanfare, you launched a wait times Web site already being described as "virtually useless" for people. Doctors say, "It won't work."

Premier, how is a virtually useless Web site that won't work for people anything but government using public money for partisan self-promotion?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Well, the leader of the NDP may want to dismiss the historic collection of wait time information and its availability for all Ontarians to access by means of the World Wide Web as not being particularly useful, but I'm eager to see how many hits we get on that Web site; I'm eager to see how many Ontarians are actually interested in wait times at their local hospital and throughout the province of Ontario. I think Ontarians are very interested in knowing what wait times are in their community; I think Ontarians are very interested in knowing what kind of progress their government is making at getting wait times down.

The member opposite may not be interested in visiting the Web site, but something tells me that thousands of Ontarians will be visiting that Web site.

**Mr. Hampton:** I'm interested in what physicians had to say: that this Web site will be of no use to patients because it's physicians who make the referrals, not patients.

But Premier, you said that banning partisan, taxpayer-funded promotion was a very high priority. In fact, your minister, Mr. Phillips, said, "This legislation is the central part of our democratic renewal initiative. It's a priority of this government and, if I may say, it's a high priority of our Premier." He said that when the Government Advertising Act was passed by this Legislature over a year ago.

Premier, it was passed a year ago by this Legislature. Can you tell me why, if it was such a high priority for your government, it hasn't been proclaimed into law yet by the McGuinty cabinet?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The Minister of Government Services.

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** I'll say two things: One is that the government is acting in everything it does as if the act was fully proclaimed.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** No, no; but the Auditor General has said this: He needs to make sure that he recruits staff, who are able to implement this act.

Recognize that this is the first time in the world an act like this has been proclaimed. We are plowing new ground here. The Auditor General wants make sure he has the staff on hand to implement it. We are probably only a few weeks away from doing it now, but we've been working carefully with the Auditor General to make sure that when he begins to have his staff on board, we do this thing completely well, because we are plowing

ground for the rest of the world on this particular legislation.

**Mr. Hampton:** I say to the Premier that this is not the responsibility of the Auditor General. This was supposed to be your high priority, Premier, and a year after the legislation was passed, you still haven't proclaimed it into law.

This is part of their continuing theme, however. You promised to combat the cynicism that people were feeling about politics. You promised to end the junketing by cabinet ministers, but your cabinet ministers have been caught billing Twix bars, \$9 Cokes and \$70 steaks to the public. You promised to clean up political fund-raising, but tonight you'll be raising money with a cabinet minister who uses taxpayer-subsidized funds to buy everything from tuxedos to theatre tickets. You promised to ban partisan, self-promotional ads, but to date you haven't done that either. Premier, why should people—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Response?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** You lose credibility with me when you say something in here that you know is frankly not true on the Twix bar. I would just say—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** You might want to rethink that.

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** I withdraw that.

I just say to the public, recognize what we're doing with this advertising act. No other jurisdiction in the world has legislation like this. The Auditor General wants to make absolutely certain he has the staff and proper procedures in place to implement it properly. Other jurisdictions are watching this. We are going to do it right. We, as a government, are acting as if the legislation has been proclaimed. The Auditor General is getting the staff on board, doing the necessary training, and in the weeks ahead we will proclaim it.

I will just say to the public that we are plowing new ground here with legislation that the rest of the world is watching, and we are going to do it right. We are going to do it properly, and we will lead the world on it.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The member for Niagara Centre knows that that wasn't appropriate. New question.

## VIOLENT CRIME

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** My question today is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. As the minister responsible for public safety in Ontario, exactly what have you done under your watch to eliminate gun and gang violence in the province?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** We as a government—and this isn't just a one-ministry initiative; it's an initiative between the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Ministry of the Attorney General—have done many things. We have brought together on the Attorney General's side a whole range of



initiatives. In my particular ministry, we have brought forward legislation that mandates the reporting of gunshot wounds. We have put together a plan, I'm sure you know, to bring forward 1,000 new officers who will help with that particular initiative. And we are working on a whole other area of getting rid of the causes of some of these things. Legislation is before the House right now on marijuana grow-ops, the proceeds of which go to bring guns into this province. These are all part of our plan to be tough not only on crime but on the causes of crime.

1440

**Mr. Dunlop:** Of course, we haven't hired any of those 1,000 new officers yet, and it won't be even in this year.

Minister, under your watch we lost our 44th victim to yet another gun slaying last night. On December 21 last year, our leader, John Tory, called on the McGuinty government to hold an emergency summit on youth violence, and in the first two months of the new year to appoint an all-party select committee to travel the province to listen to parents and community leaders.

On June 28, Mr. Tory hosted the violence affecting youth summit, attended by various stakeholders from across the GTA. On July 13, John Tory called on Premier McGuinty to appoint a committee made up of one caucus member from each party to review the Safe Schools Act. Since last January, John Tory has called on the McGuinty government over 20 times to take action on guns and gun violence.

Minister, Ontarians are demanding leadership on this issue. How many more lives will be lost under your watch before we begin to take serious action on this critical matter? When can we expect real leadership on this critical issue?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I find it interesting that last Friday both the leader of the official opposition and I attended a press conference prepared by UMOVE, United Mothers Opposing Violence Everywhere, in which they told us a heart-rending story of all these young members of our community who have been shot. Their message was not police, not banning of guns; it was working within the community, working within their families.

This is something that both of us spoke to; both of us were made aware of the situation. That isn't the first time that has happened. I have been to several forums with members of the community who have been the victims of these particular horrible offences, and they all say the same thing: There isn't one solution; it's a combined solution, where we have to get the police, the community and law enforcement regulations in place to be able to deal with this.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a question for the Minister of Health. This weekend patients suffering from rare diseases told you they'd waited long enough. Their wait for treatments for disorders like MPS

and Fabry's is infinite in Ontario because you don't have a plan to fund treatment for these rare disorders.

One eight-year-old with MPS said, "If we don't get treatment we'll get sick, and if we get sick we'll die. We need treatment available so we can live and be part of the Canadian family."

Minister, you promised a plan for rare disorders at last year's health summit. Where is the plan?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I do wish to thank the honourable member for the question, and particularly for the opportunity to highlight the progress that was made by first ministers related to the provision of product for these two very rare diseases.

We do have a challenge, which has been well identified, of having an appropriate regulatory response in the case of rare diseases, because it's so difficult to have the research to identify the benefits being provided by the product. As a result, the FPT ministers this past weekend came together, with support from the federal government, on a plan to be able to move forward with a time-limited research proposal that will include advancing product to these individuals.

We are going to move forward very expeditiously, but it is necessary to engage the companies on a risk-sharing basis and to have an appropriate research proposal, and it will be timely.

**Ms. Martel:** The question was, how long do these folks have to wait? The minister made a similar promise over a year ago. We're here a year later and there's nothing in place for Ontarians who have rare disorders—Ontarians like Darren Nesbit, who suffers from Fabry's and has been to this Legislature on more than one occasion to urge this minister to do something; Ontarians like Donna Strauss, whose husband, John, died from complications of Fabry's disease. The minister wrote to Donna on July 3, 2004, after John died, "As you struggle to deal with such a huge loss I wish to assure you that I will make certain of coverage for Fabry. Don't let any stories about the drug's slow approval add to concern about coverage." That was over a year ago—and still nothing for patients who suffer from Fabry's in this province.

I say to the minister again, people have heard your promises. They've heard them for over a year now. Where's the plan to provide coverage for people with rare disorders in Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Well, I'd say this too: People have heard a lot from that member, but the one thing they remember well is that she is a member of a political party that when in government in the province of Ontario actually reduced the amount of money available in the Ontario drug benefit, and she has the audacity to ask a question like that.

This past weekend, federal, provincial and territorial ministers came together. I looked Darren Nesbit in the eye, I looked Donna Strauss in the eye, this weekend and on several other occasions. I have told Darren Nesbit every day in the days since I met him that I have worked toward a resolution on that. We made significant progress



this weekend to create a research capacity that will provide product for rare diseases for people in this country. To hear a question from that member who has such an awful record related to the provision of product is a little galling. To these patients, I send them the message of progress and that it is the desire of ministers to move forward expeditiously on a risk-shared basis—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.

### IDENTITY THEFT

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a question for the Minister of Government Services on the—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** You know what's going to happen when you keep teasing a bulldog. One of these days, you're going to get bitten, OK?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Questions should be placed through the Speaker.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Mr. Minister, you already know the statistics that were released by First Data Corp. in their report. It found that 6.8% of adults have been victimized by identity theft and a striking 43.4% of adults have received a phishing contact. This survey was released only days after two large US banks were targets of thieves who stole 700,000 financial records of consumers.

Closer to home, the Toronto Star and W-Five reported a number of privacy breaches by our banks. We strongly believe that Canadians should not sit back and wait for another security breach. Therefore, I ask the minister the following questions: What is our government—

**The Speaker:** I think there was a question there somewhere. Minister?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** If I'm not mistaken, the question was, what is our government doing to protect against identity theft?

Let me just say that it is a very serious issue and the member from Davenport has been actively involved in this. In early July, we issued a discussion paper, and all the ministers across the country, and the territories and the federal government, issued the same discussion paper. It identifies, I think, the 10 key issues around identity theft. It asked for input by the middle of September. That input is now in. We're analyzing that. It is our hope that the ministers will meet in the winter of 2006, in the next few months, to review that and to look at possible legislation for the fall of 2006. So we are moving on it. It is a very serious problem that the member has identified. As I say, I think we've identified the 10 key issues and we're looking for long-term, solid solutions.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. In my own case, the Toronto-Dominion Bank and CIBC wrote to me explaining that my security may have been breached regarding my own account. I'm sure that I'm not alone and not the only one to whom they wrote this letter.

More importantly, W-Five reported two days ago that the Secret Service and the FBI took down a ring of cyber criminals known as Shadowcrew. Just one lone member of this gang had a Web site where he was selling half a million stolen credit cards. Interestingly, the Secret Service approached the RCMP about the Canadian connection to Shadowcrew, but the Mounties passed on the case, handing it over to local city police, saying they had limited investigative resources. In other words, this is not a priority for them.

If the RCMP can't protect consumers, what can ordinary Ontario residents do to protect themselves?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** Again, I say to the member, the long-term solutions will rest in that paper I talked about. In the short term, my advice to Ontarians is that one thing you can do is look on our Web site. The Ministry of Government Services has a Web site and we have several practical areas that they can look at: "Protecting your identity", "How can I reduce my risk?", "How do I know if my identity has been stolen?", "What if I am a victim of identity theft?", etc.—some good practical suggestions there. My predecessor, Mr. Watson, last year issued an instruction guide on how you can protect your personal identity. He also did the same thing for businesses, as an assistance to business.

My advice to the member from Davenport in the short term is: Take a look on our Web site. I think there are very good, practical suggestions that would help the people of Ontario protect their identity, and we're dealing Canada-wide with some long-term solutions to the major issues there.

1450

### ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services regarding Bill 183, the adoption disclosure bill. You have claimed that a no-contact provision will protect those who do not wish to reunite. You cite the state of New South Wales in Australia as your example of the success of a no-contact provision. In committee on September 15, according to your staff, there has never been a prosecution for the past 15 years, all the time that this legislation was in place in New South Wales. Further, on September 15 in committee, your staff promised to supply the members of the committee with the sources of information they had in New South Wales regarding this issue within seven days. It's now a month and we haven't heard anything; the committee hasn't heard anything from your staff.

This bill is a mess. Your staff is not keeping its word. Will you postpone the debate on this bill, which is to be called tomorrow night, until the committee is satisfied—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. The question has been asked.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** Thank you very much for the question. I hope



that we will go forward and have a very successful debate, perhaps this week in this House—as early as tomorrow.

I will say to the member opposite, in discussion about Australia and their experience, that what we did and have been doing for several months is simply picking up the phone and calling people who were active at the time to see how they changed their laws in Australia and how it has worked. We have been on the phone repeatedly.

Moreover, a point that I think members of this House will be interested in is that they passed, some time ago, their review of legislation that they brought in five years ago that didn't have a disclosure veto. With all of the naysayers who may have been around in that time, they had such an open opportunity to change and strengthen the legislation and in fact they didn't because what they found was that the sky didn't fall. What they found were tremendous examples of people being reunited, in many cases, and being contacted when it was appropriate. So in fact it has worked quite well in Australia.

We're happy to pass along those numbers to the member opposite, and perhaps he should have gotten them sooner.

**Mr. Sterling:** But you see, this is specifically the problem. In fact, her staff did indicate that there was some discontent with the no-contact provision in New South Wales, and we asked for that information.

At first reading, you proposed to give open access to adoption records to men who had raped women and to people who had abused their own children. Now you make those affected people plead in front of a tribunal in order to keep their privacy from these criminals.

At the last minute, your ministry discovered it had inadvertently shut down all disclosures under the existing system for the 18-month period of time between the new and the old legislation.

This legislation is a mess. Why don't you follow Alberta, BC and Newfoundland and pass a bill that can be implemented successfully—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. The question has been asked.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** I appreciate that second question, but I think that in this debate we do have to stick with the facts, and the facts are these. As we expressed on first reading of this bill, a number of items around protections for people who may come of harm were always going to be built into the regulations of the bill—something that doesn't happen until after that bill is passed. We can't speak to what those regulations would be, or that would be considered in contempt of the House.

What we did in response to questions, mostly from the Leader of the Opposition, was that we said, "So that you will understand what our intent is during the regulatory process after the bill is passed, we will amend the bill and put those protections in the bill," which we did.

This member asking the question chooses to characterize it in that way. I have to say that we simply disagree. The truth is that we will have, I hope, after third reading,

a balanced approach so that people have a right to know and people have a right to their privacy.

## VIOLENT CRIME

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. At 2 a.m. this morning, a 21-year-old man was shot dead in Toronto. At 9 a.m., seven hours later, two men shot at each other through rush-hour traffic at Bloor and Sherbourne. Day after day, the gun violence continues in the largest city in Ontario, and your government's response has been to hold press conferences. Premier, when is the McGuinty government going to take action and make the significant social and community investments that are needed to address gun violence issues in this city?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The Attorney General.

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** In terms of investments in the community, which is something the member referred to, since our government took office we have been funding a youth-at-risk summer jobs initiative, which created 300 jobs for youth at risk. Those are 300 lives, 300 people, who were given an alternative to sharing their lives with a gun and bringing human misery upon a community.

That's why we invested \$20 million, in annualized funding, to reduce user fees for and increase access to community-based schools. Every hour that those schools are open is an alternative and another opportunity for these young people.

That's why we invested in five projects so that approximately 100 at-risk youth can train to become apprentices for skilled trades.

We have, we are and we will continue to do all that we can to address not only this horrific gun crime but the causes of it.

**Mr. Hampton:** I say to the Premier, people are being shot on the streets of Toronto in record numbers, and what your minister recites are pilot projects that community representatives have told your government are inadequate, and also that the funding runs out on.

Where, they ask, are the after-school programs that have been cut and need to be restored? Where is the money for adequate youth employment strategies? Where is the strategy to deal with the hundreds of young people who are being expelled from school and simply being put on the street?

I say again, people have heard the platitudes, they have heard the speeches from your government; where is the funding and where are the strategies to take on a gun violence problem that becomes more serious every week?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** It is very serious, and there's no question about it. These people who have lost their lives in the past few days—it's totally, totally unacceptable. We have been and we will continue to make progress as we do provide community programs.

I'll just give you one example, I say to the member. Ilene Watt, the executive director of Basketball Ontario,



wrote to the Honourable Jim Watson saying this: "It has made an incredible difference to the delivery of basketball programs by our member clubs across the province"—what we have done. "The seven years of cutbacks in funding to the school system by the previous government actually eroded the number of children playing house league by an estimated 10,000" people "as gym fees continued to rise." When we came into government, we took action to reverse that, to change that and to give those kids that opportunity that they never had before.

There is much, much more to come.

### HOSPICE CARE

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, your announcement earlier this month about end-of-life care for Ontarians struck a chord with my constituents of Thornhill and Concord. The end of our lives can be some of the most touching and spiritual moments we experience. Part of our announcement was about allowing more Ontarians to spend these final months and days in the comfort of their homes, surrounded by the love of family and friends. Minister, can you tell the House about how more end-of-life services will be provided to Ontarians in their homes?

1500

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I think all families struggle with the challenge related to the provision of appropriate care for loved ones at the final stages of their lives. I'm proud of our government and our province's ability to move forward with the expansion of end-of-life care through a \$115-million investment over three years. The first phase of this in this fiscal year involves \$39 million to expand the support that is offered through community care access centres by \$27 million, to provide \$6 million for those organizations that are providing hospice services to people in their own homes. What I'm most excited to remind members of is that we've begun to build a network of residential hospices, 30 of them, across our province. They'll be developed and funded over the course of the next three years, with the first nine of those receiving support already. That's in places like Brantford, Hamilton, Burlington and Etobicoke. All across the province we're moving forward to provide better care.

**Mr. Racco:** I also understand that part of the expansion of end-of-life care is expanding the availability of residential hospices in the province. I believe that this kind of care and, most importantly, the options for this kind of care, will provide returns that cannot be calculated by dollars and cents.

I saw from your announcement that York region is one of the four communities encouraged to initiate planning for a residential hospice. I believe that my constituents deserve the options that a residential hospice can offer. Can you tell me how York region can organize a proposal that will see my constituents have access to this new hospice?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I said a moment ago that a strong element of our plan is the development of 30 residential hospices across the province. We are very, very proud that many communities in Ontario have taken up this initiative. Of course, there is a tremendous degree of love and community support involved in the provision of this kind of care.

We did, in analyzing it, though, note that some communities—I can remember three of the four at top of mind: Sarnia, Kingston and York region—stood as places where we did feel that there was a necessity of the development of residential hospices. Accordingly, we have held a spot in line and intend to work with communities for such a model to evolve. We think it's important to be able to evolve it, to have end-of-life care, to care for people at home, in hospitals and, of course, in residential hospices. I appreciate the capacity to move forward based on the strength of the volunteer component, which in hospice is so enormous.

### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** A question to the Minister of Finance: Over the past few weeks Ontario homeowners have been receiving their property assessments from MPAC. Let me give you a bit of a list: in Toronto, assessments are up an average of 12%; in Brantford, almost 16%; in the Hamilton area, almost 16%; in communities in Huron and Bruce counties, upwards of 20%.

Minister, will you commit today to lower the education property tax rate so that taxpayers in these communities are not faced with massive tax increases?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** I will remind the member opposite that the legislation which his government proposed and passed created this system—and still supports it, I presume, unless we're doing an about-face.

Higher assessments do not necessarily lead to higher taxes. Indeed, across most communities there will be some up, and there will be some down. If reassessment results in an overall increase in property values, those municipalities can reduce the tax rate effect and offset the increase, given the way the assessment process works.

The Ombudsman is looking at this system. We'll see what the results are once we get them in, but I remind the member opposite again, the changes in property value assessments don't necessarily lead to property tax increases, and I'm surprised he doesn't know that, because it was his government that voted for and passed this particular legislation.

**Mr. Hudak:** I think the minister very well knows that he has the ability to set the education property tax rate. That's set provincially. We've heard your answer to municipalities. It's not, Minister—with all due respect, what I asked you about. I'm asking you to do your part. You are part of a government that has increased taxes substantially on working families, part of a government



that has increased hydro rates substantially on working families—new user fees. Minister, people in Ontario are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet under Dalton McGuinty. Just tell me one thing today and assure residents across the province that you will lower the provincial education tax rate and not have a massive stealth property tax increase going into your coffers.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Unlike the previous government, this government has heard the public's concerns and responded. Let me remind him, we have increased the property tax credit for seniors from \$500 to \$625, an increase of 25%. We've altered timelines by amending the Assessment Act itself.

MPAC has responded to some of our recommendations in terms of improving their level of customer service.

This government's priorities are health care and education. We're reducing wait times in health care. We've provided \$6 billion to reinvest in post-secondary education, in a way that that government never did. We have increased funding for municipal infrastructure investment and begun to undo the damage you created when you downloaded services on to municipalities. This was your legislation—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.

#### BY-ELECTION IN SCARBOROUGH-ROUGE RIVER

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Premier. Some six weeks ago, the member for Scarborough-Rouge River resigned, and for the last six weeks the people of that constituency have not had someone to speak for them in this Legislature. You must be ready, because you bypassed the democratic process of your own party by appointing your Liberal candidate. Surely, you must be ready. When can the people of Scarborough-Rouge River expect to have a representative in this House?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I can appreciate the member opposite's impatience. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate our new ambassador to the Dominican Republic for the wonderful work he has done for some 20 years on behalf of his constituents.

I can tell the member opposite that we will be making an announcement in due course.

**Mr. Prue:** Mr. Premier, I'd like to remind you of what you said before the last election. You said, "Elections used to be designed to foster public participation. Now the timing and rules are cynically manipulated to reduce turnout and minimize exposure of the government's record." Then you went on to say, "It is time to put the 'silly guessing game' behind us once and for all." That is my question to you today. When are you going to put the silly guessing game behind us? When are you going to call the by-election?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Had I known I was keeping the member opposite up nights, when he's so obsessed about this issue—I can tell you that we have now, for the first time in Ontario, fixed election dates. The member opposite knows that a by-election must be called within six months. I would simply ask that he stay tuned and be ready.

#### PATIENT TRANSFERS

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** My question is for the Attorney General. I've been hearing the concerns of my constituents in Lambton-Kent-Middlesex regarding the transfer of a patient from the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto. My constituents are expressing public safety concerns based on their history with this patient. Minister, can you tell us and my constituents, what is the ministry's position on this transfer?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** As the member knows, the matter is before the court, so the purpose of the discussion here in the Legislature needs to be as much about sharing information as anything else. The crown attorney has got to be in a position to make an independent judgment on matters such as this, and that's exactly what happened. The crown attorney opposed the transfer request at the hearing before the Ontario Review Board. The Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre has appealed the review board decision, and the ministry has joined the appeal. A date for the hearing has not yet been scheduled. That's as much information, I think, as I can share with you and this House.

1510

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** What steps have been taken to ensure that the victims and their families are kept informed about the Ontario Review Board's decision to transfer the patient to a medium-security facility in Toronto?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** I'm informed by crown counsel that the crown has contacted some of the victims' families and that all efforts are being made to reach the remaining victims and their families. I understand that the appeal process has been explained and discussed with the victims' families and that crown counsel will continue to receive input from the victims and their families and keep them apprised of the progress. This is a very important principle, generally speaking, obviously: that victims be kept informed as best as possible and in the most timely fashion possible. That's certainly a principle that we always pursue. It will be a requirement that, come January, will be entrenched in our laws in Canada, but for some time now, it has been the position of the Ministry of the Attorney General that we have to make all efforts to inform victims and their families of any changes in circumstances with respect to this person, and we will continue to do so as this matter is before the Ontario Court of Appeal.



## KARLA HOMOLKA

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** I also have a question for the Attorney General. The minister will know that Karla Homolka has a hearing today in Montreal with respect to the 810 conditions that were placed on her following her release. According to press reports, Ontario will not be represented at that hearing. The families will be represented. Their lawyer has indicated—I'm quoting from a story in today's National Post—that the French and Mahaffy families “feel to not be involved in the process at all would be to abandon their daughters.”

Mr. Minister, why did you not feel it was necessary to have representation at this hearing today?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** As the member knows, or ought to know, as he is a former Solicitor General, in the province of Quebec, jurisdiction goes to that province. So it was in their capacity as Quebec crown attorneys that our Ontario crowns appeared before a provincial court in Joliette to seek conditions upon the release of Homolka under section 810.2. The purpose of having the local crowns was to ensure that we had appropriate information and a direct funnel between victims and the local crown. We also had a crown who had significant familiarity with the facts, the offender and the offence. I can tell the member that that very crown, Mr. Ramsay, is in court today with our Quebec crowns providing all the assistance that they seek from him.

**Mr. Runciman:** According to the press, they're not interveners and not actively participating, as the families are through affidavits.

My supplementary deals with press reports surrounding the fact that the French and Mahaffy families were unable to attend the hearing because of the expenses involved. In fact, Tim Danson, their lawyer, has indicated that there was no assistance, that the families couldn't afford to pay for his services, so he himself, because of his interest and concern, is paying the costs of being in attendance today.

According to the latest reports, you have at least \$40 million in the victims' justice fund. I ask you today, why in the world would you not be paying the expenses of the French and Mahaffy families so they can be there today? Why are you not doing that?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** The member is making a suggestion that is quite inaccurate. Every single week, and in some cases every single day, there has been contact between our counsel, Mr. Danson and the families. I have personally met with the families on several occasions. We have at every moment ensured that their every thought and every opportunity for input was taken into account. There has been extensive consultation. We have been working with these victims every single step of the way. That is the position of Mr. Danson, that is the position of those families, and if there is any suggestion by the member otherwise, he's quite mistaken.

## LOBBYISTS

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Premier, Patrick Dion is a registered lobbyist. One of the reasons why lobbyists are required to register is so that people here are put on notice that they are, in fact, lobbyists. Why would you find it acceptable that Mr. Dion, as a registered lobbyist here at Queen's Park, organized a substantial fundraiser for one of your cabinet ministers, specifically the minister of fitness? Mr. Dion should have to have something akin to an arm's-length relationship with the government if indeed he's going to be calling upon the government to give his client particular business contracts and wheelings and dealings.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The member opposite will know that we have introduced real-time disclosure legislation by means of a bill in this House that's going to provide real-time disclosure of donations of \$100 or more to Ontario political parties. Beyond that, we are establishing a citizens' jury to look at electoral finance reform, which might encompass things that go outside of real-time disclosure.

If the member opposite is aware of a rule that has been broken, then I would ask that he bring that to my attention or to the Integrity Commissioner's attention.

Again, we are the first government that has decided, in a practical, real and meaningful way, to introduce legislation that would mandate real-time disclosure, and beyond that, we're asking a citizens' jury to take a look at the broader issues of electoral finance reform.

## MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I know that members of this assembly would want to join me in wishing Ms. Andrea Horwath a happy birthday.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Happy 29th, Andrea.

## PETITIONS

SERVICES FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas, without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

“Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

“Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25%



less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector, to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I've also signed this.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Further petitions—but first, can we have a little order here? I'm having difficulty hearing the petitions.

### CANCER TREATMENT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I'm very proud to present these petitions that were brought to me today by Catherine Jordan, Jennifer Harwood and Lori Borsos from Hamilton, and they read as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we are asking for funding for Velcade to be available in Ontario. Ontario is the only province in Canada not currently making funding available for this drug, even though approximately 40% of people diagnosed with multiple myeloma in Canada are from Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To push the approval of Velcade through the review process and make funding available for patients in Ontario immediately, as it is in every other province of Canada."

I proudly sign my name to this petition, because it has names on it from every community across this province, including Hamilton, Barrie, Toronto, Sudbury, Welland, Niagara Falls, Burlington, Brantford, Grimsby—the list goes on and on.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition which was delivered to me by Mr. Sonny Sansone, a community activist in my riding. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the McGuinty government has contributed \$301 million to the Canada-Ontario affordable housing program;

"Whereas this program will produce 5,320 new units of affordable housing and provide rent subsidies for up to 5,000 low-income households;

"Whereas the \$116 million allocated to the city of Toronto will assist several hundred families across the city;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the McGuinty government's commitment to affordable housing and to urge the government to keep affordable housing on the provincial agenda."

I'll affix my signature to this as I agree with this petition.

1520

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by a great number of constituents.

"Whereas, without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

"Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector, to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I affix my signature.

### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and

"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I'm in agreement and would affix my signature thereto.

### GO TRANSIT TUNNEL

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I keep getting petitions about the dilapidated conditions on the St. Clair Avenue bridge near Keele Street. The petition reads as follows:



"To the Parliament of Ontario, the minister of infrastructure services and the Minister of Transportation:

"Whereas GO Transit is presently planning to tunnel an area just south of St. Clair Avenue West and west of Old Weston Road, making it easier for GO trains to pass a major rail crossing;

"Whereas TTC is presently planning a TTC right-of-way along all of St. Clair Avenue West, including the bottleneck caused by the dilapidated St. Clair Avenue-Old Weston Road bridge;

"Whereas this bridge (underpass) will be: (1) too narrow for the planned TTC right-of-way, since it will have only one lane for traffic; (2) it is not safe for pedestrians (it's about 50 metres long). It's dark and slopes on both east and west sides creating high banks for 300 metres; and (3) it creates a divide, a no man's land, between Old Weston Road and Keele Street. (This was acceptable when the area consisted entirely of slaughterhouses, but now the area has 900 new homes);

"Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that GO Transit extend the tunnel beyond St. Clair Avenue West so that trains will pass under St. Clair Avenue West, thus eliminating this eyesore of a bridge with its high banks and blank walls. Instead it will create a dynamic, revitalized community enhanced by a beautiful continuous cityscape with easy traffic flow."

Since I agree with this petition, I am delighted to sign it.

#### FREDERICK BANTING HOMESTEAD

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Sir Frederick Banting was the man who discovered insulin and was Canada's first Nobel Prize recipient; and

"Whereas this great Canadian's original homestead, located in the town of New Tecumseth, is deteriorating and in danger of destruction because of the inaction of the Ontario Historical Society; and

"Whereas the town of New Tecumseth, under the leadership of Mayor Mike MacEachern and former Mayor Larry Keogh, has been unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the Ontario Historical Society to use part of the land to educate the public about the historical significance of the work of Sir Frederick Banting;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Culture and the Liberal government step in to ensure that the Banting homestead is kept in good repair and preserved for generations to come."

I agree with the petition, and I've signed it.

#### HALTON RECYCLING PLANT

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for York North.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Go ahead. That was my mistake. I'll get to the member for Beaches-East York next.

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas noxious odours from the Halton Recycling plant in Newmarket are adversely affecting the health and quality of life of residents and working people in Newmarket; and

"Whereas local families have lost the enjoyment of their properties for themselves and their children, face threats to their health and well-being, and risk a decline in the value of their homes; and

"Whereas for the 300 members of the nearby main RCMP detachment, as well as other workers in the area, the odours are making their working conditions intolerable;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that the Minister of the Environment take immediate action to halt all noxious emissions and odours from the Halton Recycling plant, and take all steps necessary to force Halton Recycling to comply with environmental rules, including closing the plant if the odour problems continue."

As I am in agreement, I will sign it

#### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Now that you are in my line of sight, the member for Beaches-East York.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I have a petition that is slightly different from the one that I read a few minutes ago, and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty, MPP, as leader of the official opposition, made the following commitment: 'I have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city'; and

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and

"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative; and

"Whereas the council of the city of Kawartha Lakes has demanded that the province of Ontario honour the results of the 2003 election as it pertains to the minister's question;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to honour the commitment made by Dalton McGuinty and to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I am in agreement and will affix my signature thereto.



## HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the McGuinty government is investing \$24 billion more on our health between 2003-04 and 2007-08;

"Whereas the McGuinty government is increasing the number of family health teams to 150 by 2007-08 so that each Ontarian can have access to primary care within their own community;

"Whereas waiting times are being reduced for cancer surgeries, cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures and MRI exams; and

"Whereas the McGuinty government has banned for-profit, pay-your-way-to-the-front health care, and is ensuring publicly owned, publicly funded and publicly controlled health care in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the McGuinty government's commitment to public health care, including improved access, increased funding and greater accountability."

I agree with the contents of this petition. It's signed by Sonny Sansone and others from my community, and I affix my signature to it.

## QUEENSWAY CARLETON HOSPITAL

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Queensway Carleton Hospital is one of the most efficient hospitals in the country;

"Whereas the Queensway Carleton Hospital's priority should be providing excellent patient care, not money for Paul Martin's Liberal government;

"Whereas the number of senior citizens served by the Queensway Carleton Hospital is growing rapidly in the west end of Ottawa and Nepean;

"Whereas the federal Liberal government led by Paul Martin has a surplus potentially as high as \$10 billion;

"Whereas all provincial political parties in Ontario have acknowledged the significant fiscal imbalance;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario Legislature call upon the federal Liberal government to immediately cancel its plans to dramatically increase the rent for the land now being used by the Queensway Carleton Hospital, and that the hospital be charged only \$1 rent per year."

I have signed this because I am in complete agreement. I am pleased that the NDP health critic and the Minister of Health have also signed it.

## CANCER TREATMENT

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that is signed by hundreds of people who are worried that Velcade is not covered in Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas we are asking for funding for Velcade to be available in Ontario. Ontario is not currently making funding available for this drug, even though approximately 40% of people diagnosed with multiple myeloma in Canada are from Ontario,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To push approval of Velcade through the review process and make funding available for patients in Ontario immediately."

I agree with the petitioners, and I have affixed my signature to this.

## TENANT PROTECTION

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a petition addressed to the Parliament of Ontario. It reads as follows:

Whereas the so-called Tenant Protection Act ... has allowed landlords to increase rents well above the rate of inflation for new and old tenants alike;

"Whereas the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal (ORHT) created by this act regularly awards major and permanent additional rent increases to landlords to pay for required one-time improvements and temporary increases in utility costs and this same act has given landlords wide-ranging powers to evict tenants; and

"Whereas our landlord, Sterling Karamar Property Management, has applied to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) to add a fourth high-rise unit to our compound, in order to circumvent city of Toronto restrictions on density and the city's opposition to its project;

"Whereas this project would lead to overcrowding in our densely populated community, reduce our precious green space, further drive up rents and do nothing to solve the crisis in affordable rental housing;

"Whereas this project will drive away longer-term tenants partially shielded from the ... rent increases, thereby further reducing the number of relatively affordable units in the city core; and ...

"Whereas our own MPP, Liberal Tony Ruprecht, called for a rent rollback (reduction) at a public event in June 2003 and spoke out against the proposed fourth high-rise at a community meeting in November 2004;

"We, the undersigned residents of Doversquare Apartments in Toronto, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To institute a rent freeze ... and ... rent increases are wiped out by inflation;

"To abrogate" the existing "Tenant Protection Act" and draw up new landlord-tenant legislation which shuts down the notoriously pro-landlord ORHT and reinstates real rent control, including an elimination of the Tory policy of 'vacancy decontrol.'"

Since I agree with this, I affix my signature to it.



1530

## SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Jim Flaherty (Whitby–Ajax):** This is a petition from people in Whitby and Brooklin.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

“Whereas quality supports are dependent on the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

“Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community.”

I support the petition. I've signed my name.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** That is all of the time allowed for petitions. I would say that when members have lengthy petitions, it would be expedient and in fact courteous if you were to paraphrase those petitions so that we can get as many as possible in in the allotted time.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ENDING MANDATORY RETIREMENT STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT DES LOIS POUR ÉLIMINER LA RETRAITE OBLIGATOIRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 19, 2005, on the motion for second reading of Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement / Projet de loi 211, Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne et d'autres lois pour éliminer la retraite obligatoire.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I'm pleased to—

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** With his new haircut.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Bradley notices the new haircut. Yes, indeed. I was at Slavko Baltich's barber shop on Saturday morning down in Welland South. Slavko has

raised his prices after Lord knows how many years. It's now \$9 for a haircut rather than \$8. So figure it out: \$9 plus a \$2 tip, and you're done for a good month and a half. So I tell all of you, it's worth the drive to Welland to have your hair cut by Slavko—Steve—Baltich, who's been doing it for many, many years and who took over the shop from his uncle, as a matter of fact. That family is a family that's played a prominent role in the history of Welland and Welland South and Crowland. I'm proud of the opportunity to have my hair cut by Slavko Baltich, not as regularly as I should, perhaps, but I tell you, it'll be a couple of weeks before I need one again. I'm just so pleased that the government House leader has noticed the grooming effort on my part.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I did too.

**Mr. Kormos:** And in fact the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs noticed it as well. I was flattered.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** Hey, how about me? I noticed it.

**Mr. Kormos:** Tony Ruprecht noticed it as well. Is there anybody else who wants to get their interjection recorded on Hansard?

The remarkable thing that I found—and I've asked Steve Baltich about this. I said, “Steve, when I came to Queen's Park, I had colour in my hair, and over the course of 16 or 17 years now it's gone very, very grey. How is it that other members, men, have come to Queen's Park with grey hair and acquired colour over their years of service?” I find that a remarkable biological phenomenon. All I know is that you've got access to a gene pool that I've never heard of down where we come from. Isn't that remarkable?

You remember that I was skinny as well as having colour in my hair, and now I'm not so skinny and I'm very, very grey. Others came here with grey hair, and through the course of parliamentary process, I presume—I don't know which standing order applies—they've acquired colour. And not only have they acquired colour, but some of these male members have colour that changes from time to time; there are nuances to it. I congratulate them and I'd just make that observation. Steve Baltich, my barber, can't figure it out either, and he's been cutting hair for a good chunk of time. Steve Baltich—Slavko—Welland South, \$9, and it's well worth a \$2 tip. You catch up on what's going on in the neighbourhood. He knows everything that's worth knowing. If you want something told, you can leave it with Steve and Slavko will make sure that it gets—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** Look, that's work.

The government, I know, really wants to frame the bill in terms of retirement, but let's, rather, address it in terms of work. I am extremely grateful to Kathleen Wynne, the member for Don Valley West. I'm hoping she has a chance to speak to the bill. She spoke to it briefly when she talked about the position that many women have, and I'll speak to that again. But Ms. Kathleen Wynne, the



member for Don Valley West, reminded me of the comment made by the American politician Paul Tsongas, a Democrat. Paul Tsongas is noted for, among other things, having said this: "Nobody on his deathbed ever said, 'I wish I had spent more time at the office.'" I was more than pleased that Ms. Wynne recalled that comment because, really, it addresses the issue here in a very specific way.

Most of us—you are, Speaker—as baby boomers after the Second World War, recall that period of growth of technology, growth of prosperity, as one in which working women and men dared to think about, contemplate and anticipate a world in Canada where people could work less rather than more, where people could retire earlier rather than later or not at all. They dared, working women and men, to dream about, contemplate and fight for a five-day workweek. Oh, the economy was going to go to hell in a handbasket when workers only had to work five days a week, and it wasn't too long before that that, really, the eight-hour day became a reality.

Where do you think the phrase "freedom" whatever—"freedom 55", my foot. The phrase "freedom" acquired some incredible currency. People talk about being free when they don't have to work any more, because there's work and then there's work.

1540

The last time we talked to this, we talked about the huge gulf between, for instance, any one of us—look, we are that smallest and, yes, elite portion of people whose work is stuff that I'm sure every one of us truly enjoys, that we're enthusiastic about and that we like doing, and, notwithstanding everything, if the truth be known, we'd probably do it for half the salary because we like doing it. Many professionals, white collar workers, are in the same position. They like doing what they do. But the vast majority of people who work—who labour—do it because they have to.

Again, for a member of the Legislative Assembly, if it's particularly cold and you don't feel that well on a Tuesday morning, it's not the biggest deal to call your staff at Queen's Park and say, "Tell the whip's office I won't be at the caucus meeting today because I'm not coming in until 10:30 or 11." I'm sure it's been done from time to time. You call your constituency office staff and say, "Look, we've only got those two appointments on Friday afternoon. Can you reschedule them for next week and that way I can get a clear day?" I'm sure it has been done from time to time.

But most labourers, most working women and men, don't say to their partner or their spouse, their husband or their wife, "Honey, call the plant and tell them I won't be in until 10 this morning because I've got to get the snow tires put on the car," or "Heck, I just don't feel like it," or "Hey, it would be nice to have a clear Friday, so call the mine site and tell them I won't be in today," or "Call the construction company and tell them that I won't be laying brick today or assembling wall frames, nailing two-by-fours out in cold, bitter January or February weather." Most working people can't do that.

I appreciate that tradespeople have perhaps a leg up on the vast majority of workers who are, well, workers. You know that much has been written about the alienating effect of labour when it is wage labour. Over the course of not just decades but centuries, much has been written about how artisans and artists, who have control over what they are producing and the climate they produce it in, are prepared to do it in even less-than-satisfactory conditions because there's the joy that they take with the things they create or build, and most workers don't have that.

Think about the so-called work ethic. I'm not sure—well, I do know. Again, much has been written about the history and growth—and you can read any number of sources that talked about the growth of the so-called Protestant work ethic. I'm not sure that it was exclusive. By no means was it exclusively Protestant, but the fact that somehow if you don't work, if you don't work hard and if you don't work to the point where it hurts, it's got to be bad for you; in other words, pleasure is bad. Leisure: For centuries the elite classes, the ruling classes, the nobility, the very wealthy—heck, working folks were perceived to be dangerous if they had leisure time. After all, why would working people need leisure time anyway, because they don't know about the finer things in life.

Why are we talking about this legislation in the context of telling people that they should be working longer when—what was it, Mr. Dunlop? Was it *Vanity Fair*? Was that the magazine where Paris Hilton was featured on the front cover of this last issue? Here's a woman who is extremely wealthy, and she's celebrated because she hasn't worked a day in her life. She's a folk hero; she's an icon. She's on the front cover of glamorous magazines, the slick glossies like *Vanity Fair*. She's not a model, she's not an entertainer, she's not a performer; she's just rich and idle.

Why isn't anybody focusing on the rich and idle class and saying, "Heck, never mind about making working-class people work longer; let's get some of those rich people to work even a little bit"? Why aren't we telling these high rollers, the Rolls-Royce/Maserati set, to start working even a little bit, to try working a couple of hours a day, for starters? Let's do it maybe in a drop forge, because you visit a drop forge—that's work, trust me. You're shackled to your machine, so you can't escape, although I'm sure there are people doing the routine, repetitious jobs at a lateral hammer or at a drop hammer who would want to run away and escape. The imagery, as they're doing this repeated procedure over and over again, a countless number of times each hour, must translate the shackles into something other than the safety device they genuinely are. The shackles, you see, can't travel any further, so they can't get caught in the hammer.

None of these workers—I've talked to them; so have you—are writing letters, signing petitions, calling up radio talk shows, saying, "I want the right to work in that foundry longer. Oh boy, if the vibration from the shaft of



the hammer hitting the forge or the ringing in my ears of the persistent—I'm just going to miss that so much, come time to retire, that I don't know what I'll do with myself. If you don't let me get up at 5 every morning to come into this foundry, this forge, I just don't know what I'll do with myself."

Talk to underground miners who even now, in the year 2005, work in an environment where there is the constant risk and inevitable fear of tragedy. I defy anyone on the government benches, Mr. Zimmer or anybody, to come up with a single letter they've received from an underground miner, saying, "I want to work longer. I want to work well past the age of 65; maybe 70, 75." I defy a government backbencher to produce a letter from a miner who wants to work underground longer and longer, rather than who wants to have a pension that's adequate, that's thoroughly and sufficiently funded enough so that worker, woman or man, can retire at an early enough age to enjoy that retirement.

Ms. Wynne, the member for Don Valley West, to her credit spoke in the brief opportunity she's had so far about the phenomenon inevitably of women, although not necessarily, who removed themselves from the wage workforce to raise kids—to have children and to care for them. Look, there's nobody in this chamber downright stupid enough to suggest that that isn't work. It's incredibly hard work. Women in the home work incredibly hard. Again, most of those tasks still fall to women, however unfortunate and regrettable that is in terms of how we perceive roles. But you watch women, women having kids and then raising them. Again, the strength and the tireless days I'm sure are fatiguing. But of women working at home—and Ms. Wynne spoke about women who remove themselves from the wage/salary workforce and then re-enter it once their kids are perhaps teenagers or high school age or out of the house, and how they then have some serious catch-up to do when it comes to getting pension eligibility, if they get any of any significance at all. And I agree, but surely to goodness that means we should be talking about giving value as a society, giving value as a culture, identifying the work that parents do, parenting—and if it's women, then women; if it's not, then it's a father—raising those children, and attributing some monetary value to it so it can be pensionable work as well. It's not hard to design. It's not overly complex. It's far from impossible. Why aren't we debating that issue? Why is it that we're debating people retiring at a later and later age?

1550

A similar circumstance to the one that Ms. Wynne described with respect to, in her case, a mother, a woman, is the case of new Canadians, people who come to this country from any number of places in the world—and they come here from everywhere in the world—who begin working here at an age 10, 20 or 30 years older than most Canadian or Ontario workers who begin their working careers. Once again, they'll have to work longer to acquire even minimal levels of pension eligibility or they may not be able to retire at all. Again, there's

validity to that observation. But I say once again, it shouldn't be about telling these people they've got to work until they die in the workplace. If you tell someone who comes to this country as an immigrant who's old enough and who's never going to get a decent pension, that's what you're saying: You've got to work all of your life, literally.

Why aren't we talking about, however historic it is now, things like guaranteed annual incomes for people in this province and in this country, recognizing that not everybody has the opportunity to work sufficiently long in the wage workplace to acquire pension eligibility? Surely the solution isn't to simply tell them to work until you drop and to tell them that we're a provincial community and a national community of tiers, of those with pensions and those without pensions, of those with sufficient pensions and those without sufficient pensions or those who are just downright dirty wealthy enough, dirty rich enough, that they don't care anyway. Bill Gates—he's an American, not a Canadian, but he doesn't have to worry about a pension. He's rich enough. He doesn't have to care about it. Conrad Black doesn't have to worry about a pension; he has to worry about getting parole at a sufficiently early age so he can enjoy his senior years.

It's interesting to see where the impetus has come from around the elimination of a retirement age. It has come from professors at the college and university level and some high school teachers. But you talk to high school teachers, and most high school teachers I know have got their time calculated to the final minute of when it's, "So long, been good to know you, and I'll see you at reunions from time to time if my busy itinerary permits it." We shouldn't begrudge a worker retirement with a sufficient level of pension at a sufficiently early age so they can do things like travel, help raise grandkids or do volunteer work, whether it's in their community, in their province or in their country or beyond, that during their working lives they simply didn't have the time to do.

In fact, firefighters and police officers have asked to be exempted from Bill 211. The government exempts some of its own people to whom it pays salaries: judges, masters and justices of the peace. So it is peculiar for the government in its opening comments on this issue to say, "This is all about rights," but then to say, "But we agree that it's not a right that firefighters should have, it's not a right that police officers should have, it's not a right that judges or JPs or masters should have"—judicial officers in the county court, district court, Superior Court system. That's dated language, "county court."

In fact, there is no mandatory retirement age. There is no legislation that creates mandatory retirement. This bill—if indeed it passes, and I fear that it will—is going to change the culture around retirement significantly in much the same way that the introduction of Sunday as a wide open shopping day and workday has. Did the sky fall when so-called Sunday shopping was introduced? No, but the culture sure changed, didn't it? Sunday was just another day.

Look, it's not a matter of the religious observance of Sunday. People are entitled to that if their religious faith



tells them that. But it was a matter of a common pause day, a day of rest, a day that's set apart, a day where, by and large—we understand police officers work on Sundays, and always have, and firefighters do; a whole lot of people have because they have to—most workers can expect and live with the expectation and organize their lives and their families can focus and organize themselves around the reality that Sunday was going to be a positive. Whether you used it for religious worship—and I understand that not all religions regard Sunday as their Sabbath—or whether you just used it to spend time with your family to do leisure things, maybe to do nothing more than put your feet up and have a ginger ale or a beer and watch the football game, what's wrong with that? Nothing. But as you well know—and all of us, I think everybody in this chamber, has probably been in this province since the introduction of Sunday shopping—Sunday has become a far different day. It's just like a Saturday, just like a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. And I tell you, family life has changed significantly, community life has changed significantly since we secularized Sunday. So while the sky didn't fall, it sure changed the culture.

I put to you that the implications, the consequences, the effect of Bill 211 is going to go far beyond that. It will change the attitude around retirement ages. The right to work? I talk about the right to retire. This bill will begin the rapid erosion of 65 as the target for retirement age, the highest target, because the struggle over the years has been to do it earlier and earlier. Like more than a few members in this room, I am of the age where, rather than attending our friends' parents' funerals, we're attending our friends' funerals. Those of us baby boomers, once again, who are in the middle ages of life—however, at the beginning point—are understanding that, yes, time is fleeting and there's a whole lot to be done. Nobody on his deathbed ever said, "I wish I had spent more time at the office."

We are reinforcing that old and entrenched and fixed value system wherein people are valued for the work that they do rather than for who or what they are. If there are people who think it's a good thing to entrench that further, I say, God bless, I disagree.

**1600**

The 21st century was supposed to be a century wherein people enjoyed the benefits of technology, wherein people worked less—fewer hours a day, fewer days a week—and wherein even the working classes spent time on leisure activity, not just the horse set, the equestrian set, not just the country club set, not just the huge mansion on Georgian Bay set or the wintertime in Palm Beach set or the Jaguar and Mercedes-Benz set, but where working class people had a chance to engage in leisure activity too.

I read an essay written by Bertrand Russell in 1936. Bertrand Russell reflected on work and, among other things, the fact that the concept of work gives you dignity and to work is good, that if you're idle it's no good, that hard work makes you a better person. It wasn't working

people who thought those things up; it was the rich people who thought those things up. It was the people who wanted wage labour, wage slaves, to produce their wealth for them instead of going out and producing it for themselves. It was that wealthiest and richest and most powerful of classes that cultivated the language around work and hard work making you a better person.

Even today there is the myth in North America that if you work really, really, really hard, then you can be just like those people on those soap operas—Dallas and what have you—on television. If you work really hard and you invest your money—oh yeah, this is good—if you invest your money in the stock market, you can be just like those rich people. You can have freedom. Look, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. doesn't sell lottery tickets so that people can keep working; it says, "Buy the lottery ticket, and if you're a winner, you won't have to work any more. Winners don't work." You understand what I'm saying? If you don't have to work any more, you're a winner.

Those New York City sets and the Hollywood rich sets, they're winners, because they don't have to work because they're rich. Nobody tells them, "That's not good. You shouldn't be idle like that. You shouldn't be travelling around on your cruise ship or on your private plane, because if you're not working hard, you're not a good person." No, they get on the front page of magazines. They're treated as icons; some by young people, others by their parents. The idle rich are heroes because they're rich and they don't have to work.

The government wants to change the culture around 65 as a retirement age. What will the impact be? I'm convinced that the impact will be that employers, bosses, the corporate world, will see this as the excuse to contribute even less to pension plans, because if 65 is no longer the target age—think about it—every additional year before retirement will save the corporate world huge amounts of money in terms of what it has to pay into pension plans.

For that matter, understand that only a portion of people in this province and in this country have pensions. Huge, huge numbers of workers, working women and men, have no pension; the hardest workers have no pension.

Almost inevitably, the better your job and the more money you make, the more likely you are to have a pension. It really should be just the other way around, shouldn't it? It should be the poorest workers, the ones for whom an RSP is irrelevant because they don't have enough money to contribute to it—and besides, you can save \$500 a year at compound interest for a thousand years and you're still not going to have enough to retire on. That's why it really frosts your glasses when you see the federal government pounding its chest about increasing RSP contribution rates up to \$18,000 or \$18,500. It doesn't do working folks very much good, because you've got to make a good chunk of money to be able to put \$18,000-plus a year—that's not where it's at, but that's the target—into your RRSP. You need quite a bit of income to qualify. It does nothing for low-wage work-



ers, who are the vast majority of workers and the hardest-working workers. It is just criminal that the people who work hardest and at some of the most dangerous jobs earn the lowest of pay and have the least likelihood of ever collecting a pension.

And the myth of mandatory retirement—there are folks over 65 working all over Ontario. Oh, yes. There are university professors who at that age, it seems, acquire the title “emeritus.” There are doctors. There are lawyers. There are politicians, although I’m surprised that no government member has suggested that we look to our left and to our right. Maybe they are implicitly suggesting that we look to our left and our right, because if term limits were being considered by the government, it might be a far more—I mean, mandatory retirement for politicians: Read Jeffrey Simpson’s column of a couple of weeks ago in the *Globe and Mail*.

Yes, it has been pointed out that MPPs at Queen’s Park don’t have a pension. The decision was made, and I was here when the Conservative government introduced legislation that repealed the MPP pension plan. I was here. I was sitting in my seat when I heard Conservatives, Liberals and New Democrats hail that as real progress. The understanding was that we make sufficiently high incomes. That was implicit in the argument.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** I’m sorry; read the Hansards. The Liberals were onside, the New Democrats were onside, and the implicit current throughout the argument was that MPPs make enough money that we don’t need a pension because, after all, we could just put money in RSPs every year, that our pensions were going to be private pensions. Remember that, Mr. Dunlop?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I wasn’t here then.

**Mr. Kormos:** Dunlop wasn’t here. Mr. Jackson was here.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I wouldn’t have voted for it.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Dunlop says he wouldn’t have voted for it. Oh, please, Mr. Dunlop. Mr. Dunlop says—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Kormos:** He would have defied his leader, all right. He would have taken his leader on; he would have told Mike, “Go pound salt, Mike. You can’t tell me what to do.”

So MPPs don’t have pensions, but they decided themselves that MPPs make enough money and are of a sufficiently high income bracket that they don’t need a pension plan.

But once again, the myth of mandatory retirement: There are people working all over the place. There are people working in Wal-Marts. There are people working in fast-food joints. There are people working as security guards. There are people working as school crossing guards. The vast majority of them are working because they need the extra money, because they’ve got to top up already meagre or depreciating pensions—pensions that are being eroded by the passage of time, that don’t have sufficient or adequate inflation protection.

1610

It seems to me that this debate should have been about ensuring that people who have fewer years than others in the workforce have pension eligibility as well, like parents, or I suppose caregivers, who stay home. I know a whole lot of people—we all do—who stay home to care for a family member who needs care. It could be a sibling; it could be a parent. These people remove themselves from the workplace and then enter it at the age of 40, 45, and heck, they’re not going to accumulate very much by way of so-called pension credits. Instead of telling these people to work until they’re 80, if they live that long, why aren’t we talking about devising a means whereby these people can have their non-traditional workplace work, their labour, whether they’re raising a kid or caring for a family member—why can’t we talk about giving this some value so we can create pension credits there too? It has value. The parent who raises his or her child has contributed great value to a society. The family member who cares for another family member who is ailing, who needs home care, is saving the community a great deal of money. It’s not hard, nor is it inappropriate, to give that monetary value for the purpose of pension eligibility. That’s number one.

Number two, new Canadians, immigrants: Why aren’t we talking about schemes whereby once again we can ensure that every person in this province enjoys a retirement with dignity? You folks want to talk about the dignity of being able to keep working; I want to talk about the dignity of retirement. Why aren’t we talking about a scheme whereby we can ensure that every worker in this province has pension eligibility, (1) by making it mandatory for employers to provide it, and (2) by assisting small employers—the one-, two- or three-person workplace—by creating a collaborative effort with government to provide for a group, co-operative type of pension fund? It could be done. It’s been done in other places. New Democrats have suggested that any number of times and they’ve been quite prepared to talk about it. Indeed, when Andrea Horwath gets the floor on this debate she’s going to have a whole lot to say about pension eligibility and the inadequacy of pension funding.

Why aren’t we talking about—because there’s been so much debate since 1995—the attack on the 40-hour workweek? Why aren’t we talking about really restoring the 40-hour workweek? Why aren’t we talking about the right of working people to engage in leisure activity too? Why aren’t we talking about the value of things that people do outside of the workplace, the sorts of things that Bertrand Russell was talking about in 1936, and the sort of observation that Paul Tsongas made when he said, “Nobody on his deathbed ever said, ‘I wish I had spent more time at the office’”?

New Democrats won’t be supporting this legislation. Oh, I understand that the academic community—university professors, college professors—have advocated for this bill. I understand that many of them are quite eager and prepared to work beyond 65, but also let’s understand that many of them do. Let’s also understand the



universities' perspective, that with the phenomenon of tenure, universities are scared witless of the prospect—think about it—of university professors not leaving the workplace at some point. There are many qualified, competent people who are kept on, but there's some point at which, with the phenomenon of tenure, the university wants to exercise a little bit of modest control over who strolls its hallways and occupies its academic offices.

But the vast majority of Ontarians want fair pensions and, again, the freedom of not having to work, because most people work because they have to, and the fact that not having to work means there are so many other things you can do in your community that make contributions to that community as well, sometimes even greater contributions.

You've been to a Ford, GM or Chrysler assembly line, Mr. Ramal? You watch those workers. The line's moving past, and it's the pneumatic drill, right? And there it goes. You can hear the zip and the burst of air, zip and the burst of air, zip and the burst of air, zip and the burst, zip and the burst, zip—watching it for 15 minutes drives me nuts. And, well, workers have to do it not just for 15 years but for 20 and 25. Let me tell you, every time they do that repeated action and the zip of the air gun with a little burst of air, every time they feel that muscle tear on their shoulder joint or their wrist joint with carpal tunnel, they don't look forward to extending their retirement age; they're scheming and thinking of every possible means there is, and they're telling Buzz Hargrove, "When you negotiate the next contract, negotiate an early retirement age." Bill 211 is going to have a significant impact on the right of workers and their trade unions to collectively bargain retirement ages; make no mistake about it.

So this bill once again ends up being very much—it's not a liberating bill. I have no doubt that the corporate world, the bosses, endorse this legislation. They just can't wait to get their hands on that money that will no longer have to be invested in pension funds because they can, instead, call upon workers to work longer and harder. Of course, every year a worker works beyond the age of 65 there's a greater likelihood of him or her dying before they ever collect the pension anyway—yet another saving for the pension plans.

I just think it's wrong-headed. It's the wrong debate, it's the wrong direction, and the debate is being held for all the wrong reasons. It doesn't provide a solution but rolls back the clock. This doesn't take us into the 21st century; it takes us back to the 19th century. This undoes, it unravels, it rolls back, it repeals all those hard-earned gains by working people over the course of generations and decades through the late part of the 19th century, through the 20th century. Here are the grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren of some of those people who struggled so hard, and rather than enjoying the fruits of those grandparents' struggles, they have to look forward to a lifestyle that's more akin to their great-grandparents' than what ought to have been their rightful legacy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh):** I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes this afternoon to speak on the bill and follow the remarks of the member from Niagara Centre.

I know the member from Niagara Centre made comments and references to Paris Hilton, Bill Gates, the Hollywood rich and soap opera stars. I'm not going to refer to the rich and famous today. I'm going to refer to a paper mill labourer who, in 1972, because of his desire to continue working—he was being forced to retire at this paper mill—because of his interest in continuing to work, did just that and made application to work at a place in my constituency; in fact, it was Upper Canada Village. I'm speaking of my dad. I certainly dedicate the few remarks I'm making today to him. He did not want to retire. He was a labourer and did not want to retire. He had applied in 1972 before his retirement to find work. He had applied and had been accepted to work. Unfortunately—and the member for Niagara Centre, when he hears that he passed away a month before his retirement from the paper mill, will say that he died in the saddle and he probably worked himself to death. That's not the case. He wanted to work. He loved work. He loved being with people and he, as do many Ontarians today, wanted to have that right to choose when he retired. I use that as an example. He set an example for his seven sons and five daughters that we have, in our lives, continued.

I had an opportunity of retiring from the teaching profession, and it was not, "So long, it's been good to know you." I would have stayed there forever if it hadn't been for a young man whom I passed the torch to. So I'm glad to make these remarks.

1620

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** As always, I find the comments from my colleague in the NDP, the member for Niagara Centre, to be rather informative and provocative. I share his concerns in some respects, but I welcome this legislation a little more openly and I do so for some slightly different reasons.

The member from Niagara has indicated that this may form complications for collective agreements and create certain adverse trend lines, but not everybody has collective agreement protection in this province, not everybody has a defined pension fund—not only, as he's established, members like ourselves, but there's a whole group of seniors who have had a hard time finding work and finding employment. I look at the statistics that show that a disproportionate number of women are widowed without any means of pension support. This will provide them an opportunity to extend their work environment and not force them out into what we generally refer to as the underground market. Hopefully, this legislation will trigger access to extended benefits and other opportunities for older workers that have heretofore not evolved sufficiently in this province either through the collective agreement process or through the consent, through legislation, by any given government.

I, for one, am anxious to embrace this legislation and certainly see opportunities here for seniors. I just wanted



to put on the record that I appreciate the concerns that have been raised by my colleague from Niagara Centre. Quite frankly, I think this legislation could go slightly further, but I will be supporting it.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** It's always a pleasure to respond to the member for Niagara Centre. His fascination with Paris Hilton and Miss Ellie from Dallas is something I never knew about the man and certainly something I think we should all take into account.

Really, this is about ending discrimination and it's about providing choice. Ontario workers who are over 65 and who choose to work, in the opinion of this government, deserve the same treatment and human rights as older workers in New Zealand, Australia and the United States, and in provinces like Quebec, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon. All provide employment protection to workers in those provinces over the age of 65. Ontario currently does not. This proposed legislation would extend those employment rights and human rights to those people.

What we are saying is that when you turn 65, we, as a party and as a government, don't think you should be forced to quit. If you choose to quit work earlier, that's fine with us as well. But we think that you should have that choice. Nobody should be telling you when you should leave work. That's a personal decision and that's a decision that we believe is best made by the workers themselves.

I personally chaired meetings all over Ontario: northern Ontario, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Kingston, Hamilton, London, Windsor, Ottawa, and in the city of Toronto twice. What those hearings did for me was dispel many myths about the aging process. It made me understand that older workers in the province of Ontario want to make choices, want to be able to determine their own lives and want to be able to determine their own employment. Why anybody could oppose that choice, I don't know.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to respond to the leadoff speech by the member from Niagara Centre. He began his speech by talking about his new haircut and the barber who performed it. I've been assured that even though he's getting close to retirement age, this legislation, Bill 211, won't affect Mr. Kormos's barber, because he's an artisan, which is evident from Mr. Kormos's haircut, obviously.

I support this legislation. I support choice. Some people want to retire early and, more importantly, are able to retire early, but others, either because they want to or because they have to, want to keep on working. Unfortunately, under this Liberal government, we're seeing a situation where more and more people have to keep on working because they have less money in their pockets so they can't afford to retire.

We're seeing increased taxes. Of course, the biggest increase has been the \$900 health tax the government brought in, which is money directly out of the pocket-book of average Canadians. We're seeing Canadians having to pay for chiropractic services, physiotherapy

services and eye tests. We're seeing increased gas prices, and now, of course, increased home heating and natural gas costs, which will directly affect a lot of people in this province, and we're seeing no energy plan to deal with these increased prices.

The big question is, will you still have a job? In the last year, we've seen 42,000 fewer manufacturing jobs in the province. Every week across northern Ontario, there's another mill shutting down; we had a debate last week having to do with that. That is the real question: Will you still have a job to go to?

But I do support the choice to keep on working beyond 65 if you so desire.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Niagara Centre, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Kormos:** I saw a brief analysis, and I want to read it. I don't have an author to attribute it to because no author was indicated, but it talks about workers' alienation, their estrangement from the process of their work. It points out that an artist, "unlike an industrial worker, typically works under his or her own direction; artists are in total control of their work.... Even the typical medieval artisan, although more closely motivated by economic needs, usually worked as an independent person—owning his own shop and more or less choosing his own projects.

"In modern industry, however, workers typically do not work under their own direction. They are assembled in large factories or offices, and they work under the close supervision of a hierarchy of managers who do most of the important thinking for them. Planners and managers also divide complex work processes into simple, repetitive tasks which workers can perform in machine-like fashion.... The rhythm of work is dictated by the quasi-military discipline of assembly lines or other regimented production systems, and by the requirements of the machines to which the workers are assigned. Workers become mere extensions of their machines, rather than machines the extension of workers.... Thus, even though workers have to exert themselves in serving their machines, in an important sense they are passive—mere objects. Modern factory work, although highly productive compared to medieval craftsmanship, has become dehumanized drudgery work."

I'm more interested in finding means of freeing people from the dehumanized drudgery work that most workers are compelled to perform to put food on their tables, to pay their mortgages. This bill does doesn't talk about freeing those workers from the drudgery of their work lives. It's not legislation that addresses the issues that are prevalent in the year 2005.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** Yes, a haircut like Mr. Kormos.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sharing my time with my colleague from Mississauga West.

I'm standing up today and speaking in support of Bill 211, not because the bill is being introduced by my



colleague the Minister of Labour and not because our government is the sponsor of the bill, but because it's the right thing to do. That's why we are speaking in support of it today.

1630

I was listening carefully to my colleague from Niagara Centre as he was detailing the negative impact on people if the bill passes. We're talking about dignity. We're talking about restoring dignity for a great segment of the population in Ontario. We're talking about choice. The Minister of Labour, when he was talking last week, when he introduced the bill for the second time in this House, was talking about creating choices for the people. If you choose to continue working, you should have that choice. You shouldn't be forced to leave work if you have the desire, if you have the capacity, if you have the ability to continue working.

As I mentioned, I was listening to the member from Niagara Centre when he was talking about how no one across the province of Ontario wants to continue working past the age of 65. I want to give you a life example. In the last couple of weeks, when many constituents heard about this bill in the House being debated, they came to my office and told me, "We're supporting this bill because it's the right thing to do, because many people want to work." They feel they have the ability to contribute, that they have the ability to give. Certainly, at this time, with the progress in health care, our life is being extended beyond 65. Many people have gathered a lot of experience and a lot of ability over the years. They want to keep investing this ability and this experience into the workforce and they want to continue to give to their community.

It's not about the choice the member from Niagara Centre was talking about: forcing people to continue working; that's not correct. It's not the intent of the bill to force people to keep working after the age of 65. It's about giving them the choice to continue or not to continue.

In the meantime, it's not going to affect their pension. As a matter of fact, when they turn 65, the pension is going to kick in from the federal government, whether they work or they don't work, because the pension is based on their work before the age of 65, whatever they put into the workforce and workplaces. This bill will give the choice and the chance to many people across the province of Ontario who have reached or passed 65 to give to their communities, to continue working in many places, if they choose to do so.

I have a constituent who came to my office last week. She was so upset because she worked all her life with a taxation department. I would say her name, but I didn't get her permission to say it. She said, "I'm willing to sign a petition. I'm willing to go from door-to-door to talk about many people of my age who support this bill." She went to Wal-Mart, I believe, and her application was rejected because, according to the law we have right now, she's above the age of 65. What about the rights of that person who wants to work, who wants to continue to

work? What about many females across the province of Ontario who decided in their early ages to raise a family, to have kids, and then want to enter the workforce when they are 30 or 40 years of age and want to continue to work after their kids go to school and they have enough time?

I think this bill is very important. It's the right thing to do. It's about creating choices for many people who want to continue to contribute to our community and to our economy and want to continue to contribute to our society. That's why I'm speaking today in support of this bill. I'm happy to hear many members of the Conservative Party are in great support of the bill because they believe, like us, that it's a good thing to do. I also hope many members of the New Democratic Party believe in the cause and will in the end support it, because it's the right thing to do.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** Today's baby boomers are the healthiest generation in history. That baby boom bulge, both around the waist these days and in demographic terms, can look forward to many more years of healthy and productive life after 60 than their parents and their grandparents did. That's why ending mandatory retirement is the right thing to do.

This is a bill to enable Canadians in many walks of life to do what actor William Hutt has done in Stratford: perform at his peak into his 80s. This is a bill to enable working Ontarians to do what our Mississauga mayor, Hazel McCallion, continues to do: serve our community through their work long past the age of 65. May Mayor Hazel remain in office and in good health as long as she has the energy and the vision to keep building our great city of Mississauga.

We want Ontario workers to have the freedom to choose when they want to retire. More importantly, Ontarians want to end mandatory retirement in a manner that is fair and balanced, a manner that won't undermine existing rights and benefits.

My constituents in Mississauga West come from a fairly prosperous corner of Ontario. Some of the people in our area welcome this bill. They look forward to working past the age of 65. In most cases, their work is not physically demanding and their minds, stamina and work ethic are matched by their experience, their judgment and their insight and the wisdom they bring to their work. Other people have done well in their careers. They have invested wisely and look forward to an early retirement, and not a late exit, from the workforce. Young people welcome the new legislation, but some have asked me if having people able to work past 65 will harm their own career chances to move up in the workplace. And finally, some people have asked me if this legislation means Ontario can expect, for example, 70-year-old firefighters. Let me address these concerns in the balance of my time today.

To those near retirement age, the new law comes into effect one year after royal assent. This means, for example, if Bill 211 is passed by the end of this year, 2005, then it would come into effect on or about the



beginning of the year 2007. So if you're in your early 60s now, then Bill 211 would be in effect if you wished to work past your 65th birthday. One question asked to me is that if someone is facing mandatory retirement within the next year or two or they've already gone past mandatory retirement, will Bill 211 enable them to get their job back? The short answer is no. But it is an interesting choice both ways.

Perhaps a policy or a collective agreement may now require that a person retire at the age of 65. This gives a company a choice if it doesn't want to lose an employee with perhaps years or decades of skills and experience. If your company doesn't want you back or won't find a way around the rules, then you know where you stand now or where you may have stood for a number of years. And so with many baby boomers stepping out of the workforce, a late career change may reinvigorate your working life and it may lend it new profitability and new meaning. If you're planning an early exit from the workforce, nothing in Bill 211 will prevent you or affect you in any way.

For young people, every occupation and profession is facing the inevitable demographic reality of aging baby boomers. Whether you're a bricklayer or an accountant, a computer technician or a corporate manager, the simple fact is that the baby boomers will retire. Most baby boomers will exit the workforce around the age of 65, perhaps one in 10 will go before 65 and perhaps a slightly greater percentage will work a few years past 65. At this point, it is a bit of a guessing game.

If we recall our bell curve in academics, a bell curve that has its origin in statistical theory, we can expect that the average retirement age will remain at or close to 65. Perhaps two thirds of all workers will retire somewhere between 62 and 68, and likely 90% to 95% of all workers will retire during the decade of their 60s. With that many baby boomers all obeying their body's calling or the actuarial tables, I say to young people getting their education that the career sound you now hear is the vacuum of skills drawing you up the career ladder.

1640

Finally, there are exceptions in Bill 211 that deal with physical requirements in specific classes of work. Just as you do not now see too many grey-haired front-line firefighters or lifeguards, a legitimate physical requirement will ensure that safety and good sense govern who gets to do demanding types of work.

Bill 211 looks forward to the needs of the 21st century, and I urge its passage.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** I don't know if anyone in this Legislature is against the thrust and the policy of this bill. Actually, there was a bill introduced by the former government which we would have carried forward and which I believe carried greater protections for those people approaching the age of 65 than the present bill does.

One of the things we did identify when we were in government was that—while this bill holds out the hope

for people who are 65 and over continuing in the workforce, it doesn't deal with a very, very touchy issue. That issue is this: As some people approach the age of 65, they become less capable of carrying on their particular function, or some of them would require a less stressful job and that kind of thing. So it's very difficult to deal with that issue without having an arbitrary age. If you have an arbitrary age, everybody is treated the same way and, therefore, that person retires at the age of 65. Once you go beyond that and say that people can work forever and that you're not allowed to have this arbitrary age, then you have to deal with the other issues. Unfortunately, this piece of legislation doesn't do as good a job as did the former piece of legislation introduced by our government to deal with leeway with mandatory retirement.

I am in favour of this. I think every constituent in my riding is in favour of it, but the trick is how to deal with those touchy issues about people who are approaching or are at retirement age and being able to have them have a soft landing as they leave the workforce and say goodbye to their service to the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** Listening to the comments from the member for Lanark-Carleton, I would have to say—and often it's been mentioned in here, as with the member for St. Catharines, as deans of the House—that as our population ages, many workers exceed the age of 65. They have great knowledge, great experience and many of those workers would be, for an enterprise, a terrific asset that should not be lost. They are an asset who will help mentor, help coach many of the younger workers. That experience today is being lost in workplaces where they're being asked to leave just because they have attained the age of 65.

Also, many people get a great deal of meaning and joy out of their work. The member for Niagara Centre and the NDP often feel that people should have to leave their jobs. We feel that the NDP should not be able to throw people out of their jobs and ask them to leave their jobs just because they've reached the age of 65.

I have to commend Minister Bentley, the previous Minister of Labour; Minister Peters, the now labour minister; and, of course, the parliamentary assistant, my seatmate, the member for Oakville, Kevin Flynn, who actually travelled around this province and listened to the people of Ontario who have said that they do not want this discriminatory practice in place and they want to make sure that Bill 211 passes and stops mandatory retirement.

This is a good thing for the people of Ontario, a good thing for our productivity, a good thing for our future, and I support it wholeheartedly.

**Mr. Jackson:** I also wish to comment on the comments made by the members from Mississauga West and from London-Fanshawe.

I found it interesting that the member for London-Fanshawe made a reference to one of his constituents who was concerned that she may have been the victim of discrimination because at age 67 she couldn't get in to work at a major department store.



It should be noted for that constituent and for others that this legislation isn't going to fix that. There's nothing in this legislation that says that an 80- or a 90-year-old can walk in and seek employment and then if they are not successful with that application, that they will be able to successfully sue the company or cause an action with the Human Rights Commission. In fact, Keith Norton quite eloquently raised concerns about the legislation, saying that there are more new questions that have been raised that will require human rights appeals and applications, and there is no recognition that this budget should be increased or additional guidelines or protection within the legislation given to the commissioner.

In many respects, we do support this legislation, but this legislation falls short in areas that deal with worker protection. This simply says that if you're currently employed and you would like to continue with your employment, your employer would need the kinds of reasons that the member from Mississauga East referenced in order to not renew that employment or extend that employment. But nowhere in this legislation does it protect people who are currently unemployed and would like to seek employment at age 67, 69 or 90, for that matter. So we hope that the government will consider that before final passage.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments? The member for Ottawa West and Minister of Health Promotion.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** Ottawa West—Nepean. Never forget Nepean, Mr. Speaker.

It's my pleasure to speak just for a moment or two in support of this legislation ending mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is a very progressive piece of legislation.

I want to tell you one story. I received a call a couple of months ago from a female professor at Algonquin College, which is in my riding. It's a wonderful post-secondary institution. This individual had started her academic career late in life, and she really only started to teach at Algonquin when she was about 57 or 58 years of age. She was full of vim and vigour and wanted to continue teaching, yet under previous legislation, she was going to have to retire, despite the fact that not only did she want to teach but her pension would be virtually non-existent. So what this piece of legislation, Bill 211, does is it give hope for those individuals, particularly females, who often enter the workforce later in life because, in many cases, they're raising families.

It's also rather hypocritical, as usual of the New Democrats, to oppose this legislation, because of course as—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Minister, perhaps another word would be appropriate. If you could withdraw that.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the word "inconsistent" is more appropriate.

Of course, members of provincial Parliament can stay here as long as the people keep electing them. You can keep getting re-elected and re-elected. Look at Norm

Sterling; he's a young-looking 90-year-old over there. He's done well for himself.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth—Middlesex):** He's well preserved.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** He's well preserved.

Since we're allowed to stay here, why not give the right to every member of this community, every citizen of Ontario, to work until they decide themselves that they want to retire?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for London—Fanshawe.

**Mr. Ramal:** First of all, I want to thank the members for Lanark—Carleton, Mississauga East, Burlington and Ottawa West—Nepean for their comments about what we said earlier.

It's very important that we mention it's about creating choices. I was listening to the minister talking about choices and why that choice has been given to some people and some segments of our society, and some others aren't being given that chance or the choice.

Also, I want to comment on the comment of the member for Burlington. I think he brought up a very important and significant element to the bill, and hopefully it will be included in the regulations: to eliminate the discrimination against people who want to work past age 65—it's very important—and not just force them into retirement when they reach 65. Hopefully, it would be eliminated and would give a chance to people, regardless of age, to be eligible, to be able to apply to for a job and get it, and not be discriminated against because of their age.

1650

It's very important to work on that bill and the details of that bill, but I believe it's a very important step. Hopefully, we can continue to work out the details that will eliminate discrimination across the board and give the chance to many people across Ontario who reach 65 and beyond to apply for a job and get the job. I believe that many people who reach 65, 67 or whatever age have a lot to offer: They have a lot of experience, a lot of knowledge; some of them have physical abilities or mental abilities to give us, to give to the community. That's why, hopefully, this bill will go to a vote and pass after this debate. Many Ontarians want the bill passed not a year from now or tomorrow; they wanted it passed yesterday and the year before, because it's long overdue.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Jackson:** I'm very pleased to be able to stand in the House this afternoon and offer my personal support of Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement.

Having been in this House for many years, this is an issue that I have had occasion to look at various times. I was very pleased when the Honourable Keith Norton, the Ontario Human Rights Commissioner, recommended that Ontario amend its Human Rights Code and remove the upper age limit, and that has been in our legislation since 1977.



This was done by the honourable commissioner in 2001, and he specifically issued a paper after he had researched it. This is what he said in one of his conclusions: "Making a decision solely on the basis of age and not on the basis of a person's ability to perform the essential duties of the job is a form of unequal treatment." I agreed with the minister at the time. In fact, I was his minister at the time that the Human Rights Commission was under the Ministry of Citizenship and I supported his findings. I took them forward to cabinet, and we began a consultation process and it had my full support. I was also minister responsible for seniors in those days, and it was eminently appropriate that we'd be bringing it forward. I was pleased that immediately after a cabinet shuffle, the gentleman who followed me, Carl DeFaria, actually tabled the legislation after we had worked on it.

For the record, the current legislation, as tabled by the Liberal government, is an extension of the work that was done by the previous government. However, it falls short in a couple of areas where I believe it's worthy of comparison that the previous legislation did move in a couple of other areas. It's also interesting to note that that legislation was tabled in May 2003 and would have become law on January 1 of this year, 2005.

Everyone who has been concerned about this issue has asked why it has taken the government two years to come to the point of tabling the legislation. Again, it may be a year and a half before this is proclaimed, so as much as four years will have been lost in the process. As the member for Nepean-Carleton indicated just a few moments ago, this will affect quite a few Ontarians just on the issue of putting in sufficient time in order to get their pensions.

Our legislation to end mandatory retirement was our response to the issue of age discrimination, especially as raised in a letter by the commissioner, as I've said. This was done back on April 30, 2003, in our throne speech. It was contained in this promise: "The government will also introduce legislation to allow more seniors to remain active in the workforce—retiring at a time of their own choosing, not an arbitrary, government-appointed time."

As I say, we were very pleased that it had the full support of the commissioner. It had the support of a lot of editorial comment around the province. According to the *Toronto Star*, they said, "I think there will be widespread support for it." ... "More and more these days, people are having families later in life ... they may very well still have children at home when they turn 65." That was an editorial in the *Toronto Star* on April 6, 2003.

So I really don't think we needed to take two and a half years to discuss this issue. Not to suggest that the consultations didn't bear some fruit, but this legislation is barely a page and a half long, so I don't think the widespread consultation resulted in any difference of opinion on the central question about whether or not we should end mandatory retirement. But the legislation really has no meat on the bones of a very important public policy decision and it will, as I will state later on in my com-

ments, raise some concerns and questions for workers and employers both.

If passed, the current legislation would amend the Human Rights Code to ensure that people 65 years of age and older could not be forced to retire, while providing a one-year transition period to allow workplaces to prepare for these kinds of changes. It would also prohibit collective agreements from including mandatory retirement and would override existing collective agreements. I suspect that's one of the reasons my colleague from Niagara Centre is concerned. I also have a concern about overriding collective agreements. I don't think it's all that terribly appropriate in this day and age. Those collective agreements are binding, and I have a little bit of difficulty, as I know he has as well.

The bona fide occupational requirement provisions permitted under the code would continue, and this is to mean employment requirements or qualifications that are necessary for the performance of essential job duties. Currently in Ontario, there is no legislation that requires workers to retire by a certain age, but neither does it contravene any legislation for employers to develop their own retirement age rules and enforce them, either through individual or collective agreements with employees or unilaterally where no such contract exists. This is due to the fact that Ontario's Human Rights Code prohibits age discrimination in employment only for the under-65 age group. Of Canada's 10 provinces, five of them—New Brunswick, PEI, Quebec, Alberta and Manitoba—have already abrogated mandatory retirement. In addition, federal employees cannot be subject to mandatory retirement—unless you're David Dingwall, I guess.

The notion of ending one's working days with a period of leisure called retirement goes back many, many years. In fact, if we check history, the very first one we can find was German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck—Mr. Speaker, I thought you'd find this interesting—in the 1880s. He decided to reward workers who reached the age of 65 with a state pension. Those are the very first ones that were recorded. But back then, most Germans would have expected to live to the age of 45, so it was a wonderful gesture.

If you look at our own history of pensions, our national pension plan, when they determined Canada's national pension age at 65, the average life expectancy of an Ontario worker or a Canadian, predominantly male, worker during the 1920s was 57 years of age. Clearly, the government of the day felt that it wasn't a great risk to offer pensions at 65 when a third of eligible workers would never, ever reach it. So that's important to note.

**1700**

Statistics Canada reports that 18% of middle-aged workers in Canada today expect to never retire for fear of inadequate pensions, no employee pension or insufficient private savings. These are the three main reasons that are stated. There's also a shift among older workers who prefer to continue working past the usual retirement age as a result of a desire for a more active, involved



lifestyle, and for many, it's maintaining their friendships in the work environment as well.

In terms of the idea that forced retirement helps to provide more opportunities to younger workers and allows for a younger and more skilled workforce, the situation has also changed. Often former high-ranking workers are asked to stay to act as mentors, and many are hired as consultants past the age of 65 to remain in that same workplace. There are also concerns noted by some that with the current aging population there will be an inadequate number of young workers to support the population of retirement age. Statistics have now shown that clearly we are going to have more and more dependence on older workers since we are not producing enough young persons either through our birthrate or through our immigration policies in order to tip the balance. The baby boomers are aging out. They are looking at their retirement, they're looking at their pensions, they are looking at social security, they are looking at government-supported benefits that will extend past their retirement, when they're not protected, and that is going to put immense pressure on our system.

In Canada, the average retirement age bottomed out in the late 1990s, as downsizing and cutbacks hit both private and public payrolls. A recent study by TD Waterhouse found that two thirds of people polled who have not retired are stressed about retirement investing, mainly because of uncertainty or a lack of money.

The uncertainty has been fuelled, as well, by recent decisions by the Dalton McGuinty Liberal government of Ontario, where their government policies have compounded the costs and impacted seniors in a negative way more than any government in my 21 years in this Legislature. The average senior on a fixed income is looking at an additional \$1,000 a year of costs. When you consider that most seniors on a fixed income, as individuals, are barely making it on \$10,000 or \$11,000 a year, an additional \$1,000 of costs after tax is a huge burden for a senior to take; and, as has been mentioned, the delisting of chiropractic services and physio services, the delisting of chiropractic services for all ages of individuals. The property tax rebate for seniors that the Conservative government passed and was ready to implement and the Liberals pulled back retroactively: That tax rebate for seniors who are renting and for property owners would have given them a minimum, on average, of \$450 back into their pockets. If you were renting at \$700, \$800, \$900 or \$1,000 a month, that rebate cheque was going to rise to something like \$700, and for property owners it could have gone up as high, in my riding—some of my seniors would have seen cheques for \$1,400, \$1,500.

We also know that the health tax, the \$700 additionally in the first year and more in the second year, is affecting seniors adversely. We know that affordable housing availability is lower in our province, especially for seniors, since the preferred clients are older seniors and new Canadians over the disabled community in terms of preferential access to subsidized or affordable housing.

We know that there are many seniors who today have a spouse going into a nursing home, so they're paying rent into a nursing home and they're having to pay rent or taxes on their property, and for them, having access to extended employment is a great concern because the state or the government seizes half the assets of the family in order to calculate the nursing home cost. Incidentally, for the first time in Ontario's history, persons in nursing homes and seniors over the age of 65 are paying their OHIP premiums. This has never occurred in our province's history, and for the life of me, I can't understand why the government brought in such a draconian tax and argues that it's equitable when in fact it very much discriminates against seniors, and specifically low-income seniors, because it's not really properly income-tested. It's a threshold; it's a double threshold. I could go on with other cost implications—the income tax rebate that the Liberal government cancelled retroactively. These all impacted negatively on seniors and give greater concern for their desire to find some source of income in order to survive in their older years.

As I mentioned earlier in the House, probably the most vulnerable of this group are women, and older women in particular, because, on average, they do not have access to pensions. I haven't seen statistics for quite some time, but it is not uncommon for some men in our society who served in the Second World War to have two and, in some cases, three pensions. But the norm for women is that they are very fortunate if they have access to one pension, so they are solely living on social security, and that is just too tight a way to live your life. They certainly deserve better access to some of these extended benefits, where this bill only speaks to the issue of extending their employment.

I think it's fair to say that the old arguments about not proceeding with this legislation really don't hold as much weight as they should. The business community has come out in support of this legislation because they see the value under many circumstances, but not all circumstances. It has been referenced that it may not be as appropriate for certain jobs, such as firefighting, police work, ambulance attendants and so on, but again, those can be dealt with in terms of strong guidelines.

The Canadian Association of Retired Persons, CARP, which is Canada's Association for the Fifty Plus, with its 400,000 members in every province across Canada, has come out strongly in support of this. I have worked with its founder and its current executive, including Lillian Morgenthau, who has been on record with this issue for many, many years. She has applauded both the legislation tabled by the Conservatives and the legislation tabled by the government. This legislation gets rid of ageism, which is an issue very close to Lillian's heart. In her comments, she made the following statement:

"Ageism is rampant in our society. Getting rid of mandatory retirement is a major step in the positive direction of combating age discrimination in all sectors of our country. It is very significant today when Canadians are living longer, healthier and more active lives.



Turning 65 does not mean bringing out the proverbial rocking chair. To think otherwise is to be out of touch with today's reality."

Again, CARP was a great pioneer in this area, but even CARP has put on the record that the issue isn't simply eliminating the age of retirement. CARP is extremely concerned on behalf of seniors, as I have stated as well, that they have extended benefits, that they have opportunities and access to continue to contribute to pension plans. This legislation doesn't clarify any of this, and it is a concern, because they do want that protection. There is nothing in this legislation that protects the shifting nature of benefits packages.

For those who feel that maintaining a career is what challenges them and keeps them alert and alive, they should have that choice based on their ability, not on their age; this was something that the commissioner mentioned as well. But he also raised some concerns about the procedures that may have to be followed. I'm quoting Keith Norton again: "Although we requested procedural amendments to the code to help the commission handle this anticipated increase and the already growing number of new complaints filed each year, I am disappointed to see that the new legislation does not address this issue. In the absence of such amendments, additional resources may be required to cope with the increased demand" for the services of the Human Rights Commission. There is concern that there will be a major influx of these claims without proper guidelines in place.

1710

The chief commissioner also noted, "There is concern that employees age 65 and older may not be entitled to other workplace benefits including disability, medical, dental or life insurance benefits, again solely based on their age." Again, the Liberal legislation is silent, and yet there is compelling evidence about the increase in health costs and the lack of access to health benefits in our province.

I support the concerns raised by CARP and by our chief commissioner. I will, however, be supporting the legislation and will work with the government to ensure that its regulatory framework rises to the occasion of meeting the needs of these important seniors in our society.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** Mr. Speaker, I know you want to hear this. Stay tuned. In about another 10 minutes it will be my turn and I'll get a chance to talk about this in more detail.

I just want to say up front that I have a problem with this legislation for a number of reasons, which I'll get into a little bit later in the debate. But I have to say up front that one of the basic issues that I'm really worried about on this particular one is that if you eliminate this altogether, what you end up with is a situation where there is going to be more and more pressure, I believe, over the longer run for employers to basically negotiate pensions with the workers that go beyond 65. Most people around here, and a lot of people walking outside,

would know that how much a pension costs is very much based on how long you're a contributing member in that pension plan and what your retirement age is.

As someone who has had to negotiate—I've actually negotiated from both sides of the table. I've negotiated both as an employer and as a union representative. I can tell you there would be a fair number of employers in this province, given the opportunity, who would love to go to the negotiating table and tell their workers, "Well, you know, this company is having a really tough time, and what we would like to do is negotiate a pension that has a retirement factor of—" rather than working out to be age 65, 66, 67, 68 etc., which I believe would put us out of step with the rest of the industrial world. The last time I checked, where I come from, out of industry—I'm an electrician by trade—most people want to get out. They want to retire before age 65.

I think this legislation puts us out of step with all other developed countries and puts us in a position where, quite frankly, we could end up in a system where people would end up having to work far longer than they want to. I don't see this as a choice where people should have the right to work past 65, because we already have that right. If a person working somewhere wants to continue working, and they want to go get a job somewhere else, nothing prevents them from doing that. They can work until age 90 if they want. No law says that you can't. The real effect is going to be on people's pensions and the ability to negotiate fair pensions that allow people to retire at an earlier age.

Monsieur le Président, je sais que vous allez être très excité de savoir que je vais parler un peu plus quand j'ai ma chance dans environ huit minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Bramalea-Malton—no, Gore-Malton-Springdale.

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased and honoured to speak and participate in the debate on Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement. I want to commend and thank the Honourable Chris Bentley for bringing this progressive legislation forward.

Prior to my election in October 2003, I worked as a family doctor for about 25 years. I had been seeing a lot of senior men and women aged 65. I always questioned them about their lifestyle. At the age of 65, most of them live an active, healthy lifestyle. If you asked them to retire, they would feel useless. They don't want to retire at that age; they want to be active members of society and keep on working.

I support this legislation because, being a family doctor and a politician, I want to serve my constituents from Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale who have given me the privilege to serve and represent them in this House. I'm 57 now. If at the age of 65 I'm suddenly told to go and sit at home, that would be discrimination. I definitely would like to work if the constituents of my riding keep on electing me.



**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I'm going to have an opportunity to speak at a little more length on this bill at a future date—possibly even today.

Yes, of course, we are in support of this bill in principle, because it is similar to a bill that was proposed by the previous government more than two years ago. I guess it's another question of what this government has been doing for the past two years. They've had an opportunity to bring this legislation forward for some time.

Ours is a party that believes in people having the right to choose what they are going to do with their lives, whether they are going to continue working or whether they are going to take advantage of a pension plan or whatever they may be entitled to. But this gives them the option of continuing to work after age 65.

One of the concerns I have in this province is whether people are going to have the ability to work at any age under this government. Maybe the mandatory retirement act should be applicable only to the people on the other side of this House. That may be what's required in this province to ensure that for those who want to work, whether they are in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s or beyond, you have to offer them opportunities.

In this province right now we're seeing the door being closed to so many opportunities because of the policies of this government. With respect to manufacturing, what affects manufacturing more than the cost of energy, and not only the cost but the availability of energy? Those are some of the things that this government should be marshalling its resources, its time and its attention to instead of dilly-dallying with a lot of silly legislation that we see in this House. They are not focusing on the key issues, and I think they need to do that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Perth–Middlesex.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to see you in the chair yet again.

There is a great Canadian, William Hutt, who is a remarkable Shakespearean actor. On Friday night he will give his last public performance at the Stratford Festival. He is Prospero in *The Tempest*. "All the world's a stage" and we are but players upon it, and to think that 20 years ago we could have been denied all the great performances of William Hutt if he had been forced to retire. He is a remarkable Canadian. People of my generation—I'm 46 and I remember watching *The National Dream*. He played Sir John A. Macdonald—to a T, I might add. He is a great Canadian, a recipient of the Order of Ontario and a recipient of the Order of Canada.

I agree with the member from up the Ottawa Valley that this bill is all about choice. As the first certified financial planner ever to be elected to this House, I have dealt with seniors my entire professional career. I know the great resource they are for our communities, and I know many seniors who are in a position of mandatory retirement who felt that somehow society was passing them by when they had so much to contribute. They need to have the ability to do that.

1720

I say to the people who are concerned about pensions: This bill does not make someone not able to retire early if they have the means and they have the ability to make that pension agreement, but for those who want to move beyond that, they have a right—a right that's in many other places. In this province we don't discriminate against people based on their gender or their sexuality or their religion or the colour of the skin, and with this bill we ensure that we do not discriminate against people based on their age.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Burlington, you have up to two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Jackson:** First of all, I'd like to thank those who commented.

I just want to say to my colleague from Timmins–James Bay that I too underscore the importance of pension protection. I hate to bring this up, but I am still talking to many of my Stelco pensioners in Burlington and the Hamilton area who are still quite concerned that their pensions have been put at risk because of decisions made by the previous NDP government of Bob Rae to allow companies to have a holiday from making their pension contributions. The government's doing something good with this legislation, but there have been occasions when governments have put pensions at risk, like in that case, and I pray to God that that never, ever happens again.

I want to thank the members from Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale, from Perth–Middlesex and from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for their comments and their contribution.

I simply wish to reinforce the fact that this is not a magic panacea with this legislation. I have many, many constituents who at the age of 57, 59, come to my office emotionally distraught. They've applied to 30 or 40 different employers and are deemed not to be the appropriate age—so much so that increasingly employers are not allowed to ask what your age is, in order to avoid this kind of discrimination. We are going to have to, as a society, start to understand the importance of eliminating ageism because so many fine Ontarians who are in their late 50s and their 60s can continue to contribute. This legislation is one small step forward in eliminating that ageism in our province.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Bisson:** I'm so glad to be here to speak on this bill. I want to show you my notes. They're right over here. I just wrote down a couple of things. This is a bit of a no-brainer debate, from my perspective. I will try to be as to the point as best I can.

First of all, I want to say that I'm opposed to this bill. Surprise, surprise. I do believe the Conservatives were in favour—looking at the opposition whip. Obviously the government is in favour of moving in this direction. I think it's the wrong reason, and I want to give you some of the reasons why I believe that is the case.

First of all, I want to put on the record: Is any member in this House opposed to eliminating age discrimination?



The answer is no. I think that every member of this House believes that discrimination at all levels and all forms needs to be dealt with. I don't have an argument with the fact that we need to do everything we can to make sure that people are not being discriminated against. But I would argue, is mandatory retirement really discrimination? Some people will argue, yes, and they will cite some interesting judgments, both on human rights and others, that speak to that. I want to really try to put on the record where I think this particular issue is going.

First of all, anybody in the province of Ontario who wants to work past age 65: Welcome to it. Nothing stops you from doing that. If you want to work until you're 101, until you drop, you can do that. You can do that anywhere you want once you've decided to take your retirement.

I heard one member earlier say, "I don't want to be in a position where the members from my constituency prevent me from representing them here in the Legislature past age 65." What nonsense. We have members in this assembly now who are past the age of 65. We certainly have senators in this country at the federal level who are past the age of 65. Quite frankly, anybody who chooses to represent somebody at a municipal, provincial or federal level of government can go past age 65. Can a person be prevented from working past age 65? Obviously not. There are people that decide to work for different reasons: They can't afford to retire, which is normally the case, or, in some cases, some people just don't know what to do with themselves and will choose to work as a way of giving themselves a sense of worth and a sense of, "I belong, I'm able to participate, and I don't just sit there and do nothing. I get out the door every morning and go to work."

What does happen in this province, and which is, I believe, a good thing, is that we have a law that says that the retirement age is 65. The reason we have that is, very simply put, for a couple of reasons, in my view. The biggest one is, it's the way we calculate our pension benefits. If an employer chooses to have a pension benefit in negotiations that allows people to retire prior to age 65, nothing prevents them from doing that. You would know that a number of institutions and a number of companies in the province of Ontario have pension plans that allow people to retire as early as age 50. I know, for example, a particular person, Donna, who worked at the phone company for Northern Telephone and who retired. I believe she's only about 50 or 51. She had worked for 30 years. Her pension benefits said that if you worked for 30 years, you're entitled to your pension, and off she went; she took her retirement. Now, is she retired? No. She's retired from active employment, but she is now putting back in the community what she feels she owes the community by volunteering and, yes, working part time once she'll be ready to do that. A lot of people choose to do that.

The point is, an employer cannot have a pension in place that forces somebody to not be able to collect their

pension by age 65. That's the point I want to speak to. What happens currently is that the bare minimum by which you calculate a pension for retirement is based on age 65. So if, for example, an employer decides that he or she wants to give a pension that is the least expensive model possible, aside from monthly benefits, they must, at the very least, calculate that pension based on the person being 65 when retiring.

The big problem I see with this legislation over the longer term is, if you allow employers to say, "Oh, well, 65 no longer counts. It could be 66, it could be 70, or it could be 103," I can guarantee you, there will be employers out there who will go to the bargaining table and say to the bargaining agents across the way on the union side, "We're having a tough time, and we would like to be able to negotiate a concession on your pension." Employees can negotiate a number of things at the table, but one of the things that the employer can't strip from them and take away is the age-65 provision, because that's what's currently in the law. So at least your pensions are calculated so that you can leave at age 65. Here's the scenario: You have mining company X, forestry company Y, auto plant C—whatever it might be. They go to the bargaining table over the next couple of years. Let's say that the mandatory retirement age is eliminated. There could be a situation where the employer tries to negotiate with the union a pension that pushes the retirement age past 65. I think that's very dangerous. I don't think that is a good idea.

I think that, at the very least, what we should have as a goal is for people to retire at 65, and we should also look at trying to get people out early. This, I think, is going to turn it the other way. Rather than trying to encourage people to retire early, this legislation will have the effect over the longer term of putting pressure on employers, especially those in financial difficulty, to try to negotiate with employees a pension that allows them to go past 65. Why? Because, if you figure out the actuarial calculations to a pension, it's based on how long you've been working there; and if you can extend the work cycle into age 66 and 67, there's a savings for the overall amount of money that I have to have in the pension plan by the retirement age. If the retirement age is 65, the pot is this big; if the retirement age is 66, 67, 68 or 69, they don't have to have as much money secured for retirement. So they end up saving money on the actuarial calculation and the amount of money that they also have to guarantee that they have on hand in the pension plan to guarantee the person's retirement.

There has been, as most members would know, a lot of work done, especially in Europe—not so much in North America, which I find quite sad—to try to do everything that is possible to allow people to get out of the workplace sooner. We know, for example, in a number of countries, like Germany, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, France, England—and the list goes on—they have been working toward legislation that treats the work cycle differently than in North America. For example, there are longer holidays up front. If you're in



France, I believe it is, you automatically are entitled to five weeks' holiday on the first day that you go to work for your new employer. There is a rationale behind that: If the employee has time off, is able to relax and recharge their batteries, they're more productive for the employer. Over the long run, accident rates go down, morale goes up, and productivity goes up, and the effect that has had on the workforce has been measured in Europe quite successfully.

1730

At the other end as well, they've negotiated and put in place—I wouldn't even say negotiated, because that's obviously been done, but by way of legislation, they have been able to reduce the retirement age. I think that's a goal that we should be working for: People who have the chance and want to retire before age 65 should be given the opportunity.

For example, I come out of the industrial sector. I'm an electrician by trade. I worked underground as an electrician and I also worked in the mills, in the mines, having to do with maintaining electrical equipment. Whenever we went to the bargaining table, one of the things that we always put on the table was to try to give our members an opportunity to leave early. Why? Working in mining, forestry or most industrial sectors is a pretty risky business. It takes a toll on your body. For example, where I worked underground, you're inhaling fumes that over the long run are not good for your health, so if you can get out early, there is a better chance of living longer. We've proven that in studies that were done, the overall wear and tear on a person's body working hard physically every day in the industrial sector. We know that if we can get people out earlier, they will live longer and have a much more productive life in retirement.

So one of the things we've tried to do—and we have been somewhat successful as various unions—is to negotiate pensions that allow people to retire early. For example, in the pulp and paper industry, retirement age is about 57 years of age; most people who work in that sector can go at age 57. We've managed to negotiate pensions that allow people to retire at an earlier age. In mining, depending on the mine you work at, it's a bit of a mix; it's anywhere from 55 to 65. But I guarantee you, if you get rid of this legislation, that 65 will become 66, 67, 68.

What we should be doing is, rather than introducing elimination of the mandatory retirement age, we should be working on the Pension Benefits Act, and we should be saying, "What can we do to put in place a pension regime in the province of Ontario that allows people to get out early?"

If the government wants to eliminate the mandatory retirement age, there should be a companion bill that deals with mechanisms to allow people to get pensions so they can get out if they choose. I would argue that that could be done in a number of ways:

(1) We should automatically vest all employees on day one when they go to work somewhere so that when you

walk in to a plant or you walk in to your employer, you should be automatically vested so that if you work three months or 30 years, the time you worked there counts toward your pension.

(2) All pensions should be portable. If I work two years or 16 years in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario in a minority Parliament, if I work at the Stelco plant in Hamilton, if I work absolutely anywhere where there is a pension plan, it should be totally portable so that whatever your accumulation is in your time that you worked, you're able to credit it toward a retirement pension so that you can leave as early as possible. So I would argue here that the next thing we have to do is to make all pensions completely portable.

(3) The government needs to be able to create, in my view, what are called MEPs, multiple employer plans, so that those who don't have pensions have a plan, that they can at least lobby their employer if there's no union, or they can negotiate if they have a union, to have the employer enter a multiple employer plan so that they're able to get pensions, especially for the smaller employers who have five, 10, 15, 20 employees.

I was talking to a friend of mine who was in the forestry business as a contractor. He had about 10 employees working for him. He looked to get a pension plan for his employees because he believed that would be a good thing to do. It was very difficult for him to do. Finally he did it, but it took about three years. He had to hire a consultant. It was very, very complicated. And only because this is a pretty progressive person was it done. In most cases, it wouldn't be done.

What you have to do to encourage employers to create pension plans for their employees is create multiple employer plans so that they can find the plan that works for them. For example, if you're in the service sector, you would go into a multiple employer plan that deals with the service sector. If you're industrial, manufacturing, farming, whatever it might be, find a plan out there that you're able to opt in to, to be able to provide pensions.

If you had vesting at day one, total portability and you had the mechanism to create multiple employer plans so that employers who currently don't have pension plans can create one, we would be able to add to the rolls of possible pension benefits many, many people who are currently not retired. But if you did it, the net effect would be this: People would retire early. I argue that the majority of people in Ontario want to retire early. They don't want to retire later; they want to retire earlier. The reason they have to work longer is because they don't have pensions. I'll talk about lowly little old MPPs a little bit later, but the point is that people don't have pensions and so have to work for a longer period in order to survive.

What do you do, for example, as is the case now, when many people, unlike when I was having our family—I'm not 50 years old, and both my kids are gone from home. My oldest daughter is 28 years old; I said she was 29 the other day and she almost shot me. The youngest is 23. Basically, I'll be able to build myself some type



of retirement over, I would hope, the next number of years so I can retire on my own by age 55 or 57. That's my goal. That's where I would like to be. But many people have their kids a lot later. So what do you do if you're having children who are college or university age and you're 60 years old? You can't afford to retire. Who can afford to put their kids through university and college on basically a CPP pension? You can't do it. They're forced to work longer. A lot of people are having to work past age 65 to do just the basic things for their kids and later on for themselves as far as their ability to survive.

I will argue that the government is wrong-headed in their approach. If you want to eliminate discrimination because of age, that's quite one thing, but what we need to be doing is giving people an opportunity to get pensions so that they leave earlier.

Most people are probably not going to do this because people don't like talking about MPPs, but I'll talk about the situation we are in in the Legislature. Currently as MPPs in the province of Ontario, we don't have a pension, period. That means anybody who comes and works in this place for one year, 10 years, 20 years, will leave at the end of the cycle with absolutely no pension. We get \$4,300 per year, I think, in RRSPs. Who here has made any real money in the market? Put up your hand. I don't see too many. I've been in the market for a long time. If you're making money, you're investing somewhere else, I'll tell you. The pension—we have London Life here in the Legislature of Ontario. We had Buetel Goodman before that. I have never made money with any of them. If this is an advertisement against them, fine. My point is, with \$4,300 a year in RRSPs, people can't afford to retire from this place, as they can't afford to retire if they are in another occupation, be it electrical, mechanical or whatever it is they do.

I would argue that members should also have pensions. Members shouldn't have a gold-plated pension. I don't believe we should have a pension like we had before, but I think members of the assembly—and I don't understand why, because I'll tell you what you have to do. You take members and put them into the OPS pension plan and you say, "If you work for the civil service of Ontario, you are automatically entitled to an OPS pension." Why don't we do that for MPPs? It's not a big leap of faith. It means that we would get 2% to 2.5% for every year of service.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bisson:** If you agree, go tell your caucus some more. You're the government.

We're being told that you guys are scared of this stuff. I want to put on the record that I have no difficulty, as a New Democrat, saying that members should have a form of pension. I don't believe that members—

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** What does Peter Kormos say?

**Mr. Bisson:** That's exactly what Peter Kormos was saying. I don't believe members should have an exorbitant pension. I don't believe we should have the situation that existed before, that people were able to work for five

or six years, get 25% of their salary and retire at age 32. That doesn't make a lot of sense. But I think that to have a pension plan such as our clerks have, our staff have, our civil servants have is not a wrong thing to do. I think most of the public would agree that anybody who works should be entitled to a pension.

However, I will say this: If we're dealing with that issue, we should be using the opportunity to look at how we provide pensions for other workers. I'm a worker here in the Legislature of Ontario. I believe there are many workers out there who don't have pensions and who would like to have one because they would love to retire before age 65.

I would argue that what this government should be doing—and you will have the full support of the New Democratic caucus—is to look at pension reform not only for MPPs but for everybody in the province of Ontario so that we're able to look at how we can provide an opportunity for people to get into a pension so they are able to retire at an earlier age. Eliminating the mandatory retirement—what we're doing there is saying to people, "Fine, you can continue to work," something that they can hardly do, but it quite frankly doesn't do anything to advance the need to develop incentives for employers to have pensions on behalf of their employees.

1740

I want to say one last thing in the time that I've got. One of the issues we also have to take a look at on the question of the pensions is pension insurance. I was a member of a group plan, Pamour Mines, for 10 years, and lost everything because of the bankruptcy. There are a whole bunch of arguments. When I went to trade school, they said, "Because you went to trade school as an electrician every two years, you didn't get vested," because at the time, the vesting provisions were more than two years. Every time you'd go to trade school, they'd say, "Oh, you're not employee any more," and then you'd go back to trade school, "Oh, you're not an employee any more," so a whole bunch of people in the trades sector ended up losing all of their pension because they were apprentices for a period of five years. My point is this: We need to have pension legislation that fixes those kinds of gaps so that people are not—I can't use the word that comes to mind but I think you know what I want to say—done wrong by their employers because they're going off to trade school and not qualifying as pensionable for the time that they worked for their employer by way of actively working for an employer. One of the things we have to look at is the cracks that currently exist within the Ontario Pension Benefits Act that allow employers to take away from employees the ability to utilize their pension because of those particular rules.

The second thing—I said it first and I went to it last—is the whole issue of insurance. The employees at Pamour who were fortunate enough to get their pensions were discounted to 75% of face value because there wasn't enough money in the plan to cover what was supposed to be there, guaranteed by law. So now they've



had to go to the insurance to get some of that back. They got some of it back, but not all.

My argument would be that if we do a revision of the Ontario Pension Benefits Act, we need to look at the insurance to make sure that if somebody has a pension benefit, it's guaranteed. If the employer goes under, no matter what the situation, you get entitlement to 100% of what you're entitled to in your pension benefits, so that at the end of the day you're not in a position of having worked all your life and then losing your pension. I know a number of people in the communities that I represent where that happened because they happened to work for employers who went under and the pension benefit couldn't be fully guaranteed. Those people ended up losing a good part of the money they were banking on in order to go into retirement.

I know that the government House leader is here only because he wanted to hear what I was going to say about MPP pensions. As I said, Jim, bring in the civil service pension for MPPs and I'll be a happy guy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** I have to congratulate the former Minister of Labour, Chris Bentley, for having introduced this legislation, and I also thank our present minister, Steve Peters, for proceeding so quickly with second reading.

I recognize that the member from Burlington does support this bill. He also recognized the importance of the bill, and that for any people reaching the age of 65 it does not mean, like we say in French, *la personne est finie ou n'est plus capable de travailler*. Donc, à 65 ans, souvent nous avons la capacité de continuer à rendre de grands services à la communauté.

This bill will give Ontarians the choice to choose if they want to continue working or retire. If a person feels that she has the physical strength or the health, she should be able to continue working.

With the cost of living today, and I don't know if the member from Timmins-James Bay recognized that, a person who has reached the age of 65 and is the only one with an income in a family of two, if the spouse is not 65—the only amount of money that person receives is a total of \$1,093.08 a month. How can you live on this income? This is why today we see more and more people aged 65 and over going out to work in grocery stores. Do you know what this is doing? It's taking jobs away from our students, but this is the only way seniors can guarantee an additional income because their spouses are not entitled to that supplement or the old age security pension.

I just hope that the whole House, the three parties of this House, will support this legislation. It's very, very important for our seniors.

**Mr. Sterling:** Notwithstanding that the member from Timmins-James Bay is opposed to this, he makes a lot of sense in some of the comments he brings forward.

Part of our problem here in the province and in our country is that we really haven't adequately structured our system so that people can retire with some degree of

comfort. While we would like to say that we're much more socially aware and we're much better in terms of our social structure than the United States, in fact, in the United States they take care of their elderly people much better than we do. Their social security system actually gives to people who retire and who do not have a pension outside of what the government provides a much greater income than we get here in Canada.

Our CPP, or Canada pension plan, was an unfunded liability that we had here in Canada. The Premiers and the Prime Minister of the day about two or three years ago got together and said, "We've got to start increasing the premiums for CPP or there will not be enough money to meet our future demand." That partially resulted from the fact that we started paying out full CPP benefits about a year after we created the program, a year after people started to pay into it. Of course, it wasn't at that time contingent on how much you were earning from other sources of income—for instance, private pensions.

We really have messed up in the past, so I agree with the member that this is not only a case of saying to those who would like to continue to work, "You can"; it's also acknowledging a failure on the part of our not being able to adequately provide for those who would like to retire in dignity.

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** I just want to take a couple of minutes to speak in favour of this particular piece of legislation. I think most of us recognize that this is a very changing world, that not everyone is ready to retire at 65. I certainly know that those people who are self-employed have the option of continuing. They are not going to say to themselves, "I'm suddenly 65; I may need to stop."

There was also mention made of the fact that sometimes in the situation of a couple where one is 65 but the other one isn't, maybe they want to continue to work until both can retire together. That should be an option that's available to them. They need to have that as a choice.

The member for Timmins-James Bay also brought up things such as a review of the Pension Benefits Act, and I have to agree. I think all legislation should be reviewed periodically to see that it is still applicable in the day and age that we are still working under those regulations. Certainly in my own office I've had people come in and there have been a number of crises in certain pension plans. I think it behooves us to have a look at what's happening in pensions and what people are expecting to be able to retire with and what they are actually getting. Those things are a real worry. But as a consequence to that, people should also have the option of being able to say, "I want to continue to work. I need to continue to work," for whatever reason.

Certainly in the agricultural community, I can go up and down my concession and find lots of farmers who are over 65. They don't want to quit. They enjoy the work they're doing. They have lived by the soil and want to die on the soil. That's where they want to be. The fact that they don't have to—we have that choice. We don't



have to retire at 65; I think everyone should have that choice.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I just wanted to enter into the debate specifically with the member for Timmins—James Bay and some of the assertions he made. I know that his response was well-thought-out, but as someone with direct experience in regard to helping seniors and middle-aged people get ready for retirement, my concern is that your fear that employers will try to diminish or take away retirement at 65—that the company will have some type of struggle financially and they'll go to the union, I guess, in this situation and say, "We really want to push that date back." In my experience of over 20 years of doing this, I can tell you that employers pay employees who are 65 a lot more than employees who are 35. They pay more because they have more experience; they pay more because their benefit costs are higher, because those people claim more on the benefits.

I don't think that companies, just using the regular rules of economics about how we pay for our workforce, would automatically go to the assumption that they would try to save money by pushing the retirement side off, though I can see the point that perhaps the actuaries would say that they would save some money on the pension side. In my opinion, they would be far more offset by the fact that their labour and benefits costs would be much higher.

1750

I think what's more likely in this province is that we need to adopt the thinking that we do not discriminate against people based on their age, that we don't pick an arbitrary line. It does not diminish the ability of a union and employers to negotiate an agreement in good faith as to what is the age of retirement. Plans that have an age of retirement today would remain at 65. But from an actuarial point of view, I don't see where that would be much of a threat, in my opinion. I'd be more than happy to hear from the member on it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Bisson:** I just want to thank the various members who spoke kindly to what I had to say. I would only say this: I've been at the bargaining table, and to my good friend across the way, I know the pressure employers are under in order to do what they can to stay afloat. Some industries are in deep trouble and, given the opportunity, will put concession demands on the table; you see that happening across this province. If they're able to put on the table a concession demand on pensions, it might even be accepted.

I'll give you a little story. The first set of bargaining I ever went to in my own local union—and at that time I would have been maybe in my late 20s—I tried to push our membership toward negotiating for benefits and pension rather than negotiating for dollars. I remember that we had a very young workforce; I think the average age was in the mid-30s. They voted overwhelmingly to not put money into the pension and overwhelmingly to put money into dollars. Listen, if you have an employer

out there who has a younger workforce, it will be pretty easy to sell taking money away from the ability to build a pension.

To my good friend Monsieur Lalonde, whom I have a lot of respect for, I'm not saying for one second that people should not have the right to work past age 65. I recognize that many hundreds of thousands of people do, and that's their choice. My point is, if you're going to do that, you have to have at the very least an offset where you give people an opportunity to get pensions so they can retire if they so choose. Saying that we're giving people the right to work past 65 is not really what this is all about, in my mind. I'm saying people can now work past 65; nothing prevents them from doing that.

Here's a good point: I have two employees. I have one who is now 67. She chooses to continue working. The government of Ontario is not kicking her out the door, and I told her that as long as she wants to stay, she can. I have one who is turning 65 in March. So that, to me, is not the issue. But their pension is guaranteed; I can't muck around with that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** Ending mandatory retirement is about doing the right thing. It is wrong to discriminate on the basis of age against a viable, experienced, knowledgeable group in our society, which I can attest to. Ontario workers deserve the right to choose when they want to retire.

The aging of Ontario's population will accelerate over the next 20 years as baby boomers begin to enter the senior years, starting in 2011, and all the baby boomers will be seniors by 2031. Seniors presently make up 12.9% of our population, but in 2025, that percentage will be 19.4%—much higher than today. Many countries—Italy and Japan for instance—are at 20% today, and that's where we'll be in 2025. That's what we have to look forward to in economic planning.

Some of the OECD countries have introduced policy measures aimed at increasing labour force participation of older workers. This is important, because if we're going to compete economically, certainly we can't bar seniors from working when they want to work. We have to encourage them. Some of the things they're doing are removing the work disincentive for older workers, strengthening work incentives in pension plans, improving the flexibility of the work environment transition and increasing the employability of older workers. I think that's where other countries are going.

We're not there yet—we're at 12.9% in seniors population—but we will be getting there. The demographics show what's going to happen. Right now in Ontario, there are about 45 people for every 100 workers. They call it the dependency ratio. That's children zero to 14 and the 65-plus. By 2025, it's going to go from 45 who are dependent on those 100 workers in Ontario up to 54. That's going to change it. There will be fewer workers supporting more people, and that's going to be difficult for our economy.

Our legislation, I think, is the right direction to go. We want to take the same place as these countries that want



to stay competitive and want to encourage their older workers to stay in the workforce. The legislation is the first step in encouraging seniors to continue their contribution to our economy by staying in the workforce longer when that is their desire. The share of population growth from natural growth—births minus deaths—will decrease and immigration will be used in order to keep the number of workers to support the people who aren't productive to the economy. Immigration—125,000 immigrants a year, and we'll still, in 2025, be in the position where we have 20% seniors and 54 dependants

for every 100 workers. So even with this aging population, we have to work hard to make sure that the incentives are there for our seniors to stay in the workforce, contribute to our economy and keep Ontario competitive with other countries that have already taken that step.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6 of the clock by my watch, this House is adjourned until 6:45 of the clock this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1758.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉES PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Estimates / Budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Cameron Jackson  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Garfield Dunlop, Andrea Horwath,  
Cameron Jackson, Kuldip Kular, Phil McNeely  
John Milloy, Jim Wilson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Finance and economic affairs /  
Finances et affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Phil McNeely  
Wayne Arthurs, Toby Barrett, Pat Hoy, Judy Marsales,  
Phil McNeely, Carol Mitchell, John O'Toole,  
Michael Prue, John Wilkinson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**General government / Affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Présidente: Linda Jeffrey  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vic Dhillon  
Marilyn Churley, Vic Dhillon, Brad Duguid,  
Linda Jeffrey, Jean-Marc Lalonde,  
Deborah Matthews, Jerry J. Ouellette,  
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Tim Hudak  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Andrea Horwath  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Michael Gravelle,  
Andrea Horwath, Tim Hudak,  
David Oraziotti, Ernie Parsons,  
Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,  
Joseph N. Tascona  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Justice Policy / Justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bob Delaney  
Michael A. Brown, Jim Brownell, Bob Delaney,  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Frank Klees, Peter Kormos,  
Shafiq Qadri, Mario G. Racco, Elizabeth Witmer  
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bob Delaney  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco  
Donna H. Cansfield, Bob Delaney,  
Ernie Hardeman, Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin,  
Norm Miller, Tim Peterson, Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio  
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Public accounts / Comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro  
Laurel C. Broten, Jim Flaherty, Shelley Martel,  
Bill Mauro, Julia Munro, Richard Patten,  
Liz Sandals, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Regulations and private bills /  
Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Marilyn Churley  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong  
Gilles Bisson, Marilyn Churley, Kim Craiton,  
Kuldip Kular, Gerry Martiniuk, Bill Murdoch,  
Khalil Ramal, Maria Van Bommel, Tony C. Wong  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Social Policy / Politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Mario G. Racco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal  
Ted Arnott, Ted Chudleigh, Kim Craiton,  
Peter Fonseca, Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,  
Mario G. Racco, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O.Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Electoral reform / Réforme électorale**

Chair / Présidente: Caroline Di Cocco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Kuldip Kular, Norm Miller, Richard Patten,  
Michael Prue, Monique M. Smith,  
Norman W. Sterling, Kathleen O.Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes



## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 24 octobre 2005

### DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

#### Foire d'information d'Embrun

M. Lalonde ..... 286

#### Événements divers à Hamilton

M<sup>me</sup> Marsales ..... 287

### PREMIÈRE LECTURE

#### Loi de 2005 sur l'agent de surveillance des prix du carburant, projet

de loi 10, *M. Gravelle*

Adoptée ..... 288

### DEUXIÈME LECTURE

#### Loi de 2005 modifiant des lois

pour éliminer la retraite

obligatoire, projet de loi 211,

*M. Peters*

M. Bisson ..... 316

M. Lalonde ..... 321

Débat présumé ajourné ..... 323



# CONTENTS

Monday 24 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Thomas Tsubouchi</b>	
Mr. Wilson .....	285
<b>Lupus disease</b>	
Mr. Craitor .....	285
<b>Volunteer service awards</b>	
Mr. Miller .....	285
<b>By-election in Scarborough— Rouge River</b>	
Ms. Horwath .....	286
<b>Foire d'information d'Embrun</b>	
Mr. Lalonde .....	286
<b>Proposed Woodstock hospital</b>	
Mr. Hardeman .....	286
<b>Anaphylactic shock</b>	
Mr. Levac .....	286
<b>Events in Hamilton</b>	
Ms. Marsales .....	287
<b>Hurricane relief</b>	
Mr. Parsons .....	287

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

<b>Standing committee on the Legislative Assembly</b>	
Mr. Hardeman .....	287
Report deemed adopted .....	287

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Gas Price Watchdog Act, 2005, Bill 10, Mr. Gravelle</b>	
Agreed to .....	288
Mr. Gravelle .....	288

## MOTIONS

<b>Private members' public business</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	288
Agreed to .....	288
<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	288
Agreed to .....	289

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Hospital services</b>	
Mr. Smitherman .....	289
Mrs. Witmer .....	289
Ms. Martel .....	290

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Ministers' expenses</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	291
Mr. McGuinty .....	291
<b>Hospital services</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	292
Mr. McGuinty .....	292

<b>Water quality</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	293
Mr. McGuinty .....	293
Mr. Ramsay .....	293

<b>Government advertising</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	293
Mr. McGuinty .....	294
Mr. Phillips .....	294

<b>Violent crime</b>	
Mr. Dunlop .....	294
Mr. Kwinter .....	294
Mr. Hampton .....	297
Mr. Bryant .....	297

<b>Health services</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	295
Mr. Smitherman .....	295

<b>Identity theft</b>	
Mr. Ruprecht .....	296
Mr. Phillips .....	296

<b>Adoption disclosure</b>	
Mr. Sterling .....	296
Ms. Pupatello .....	296

<b>Hospice care</b>	
Mr. Racco .....	298
Mr. Smitherman .....	298

<b>Property taxation</b>	
Mr. Hudak .....	298
Mr. Duncan .....	298

<b>By-election in Scarborough— Rouge River</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	299
Mr. McGuinty .....	299

<b>Patient transfers</b>	
Mrs. Van Bommel .....	299
Mr. Bryant .....	299

<b>Karla Homolka</b>	
Mr. Runciman .....	300
Mr. Bryant .....	300

<b>Lobbyists</b>	
Mr. Kormos .....	300
Mr. McGuinty .....	300

## PETITIONS

<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Murdoch .....	300
Mr. Hardeman .....	301
Mr. Flaherty .....	304

<b>Cancer treatment</b>	
Ms. Horwath .....	301
Ms. Martel .....	303

<b>Affordable housing</b>	
Mr. Berardinetti .....	301

<b>Municipal restructuring</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	301, 302

<b>GO Transit tunnel</b>	
Mr. Ruprecht .....	301
<b>Frederick Banting homestead</b>	
Mr. Wilson .....	302

<b>Halton Recycling plant</b>	
Mrs. Munro .....	302

<b>Health services</b>	
Mr. Berardinetti .....	303

<b>Queensway Carleton Hospital</b>	
Mr. Baird .....	303

<b>Tenant protection</b>	
Mr. Ruprecht .....	303

## OTHER BUSINESS

<b>Visitors</b>	
Mr. Craitor .....	288
<b>Member's birthday</b>	
Mr. Kormos .....	300

## SECOND READINGS

<b>Ending Mandatory Retirement Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, Bill 211, Mr. Peters</b>	
Mr. Kormos .....	304, 310
Mr. Brownell .....	309
Mr. Jackson .....	309, 312, 313, 317
Mr. Flynn .....	310
Mr. Miller .....	310
Mr. Ramal .....	310, 313
Mr. Delaney .....	311
Mr. Sterling .....	312, 321
Mr. Fonseca .....	312
Mr. Watson .....	313
Mr. Bisson .....	316, 317, 322
Mr. Kular .....	316
Mr. Yakabuski .....	317
Mr. Wilkinson .....	317, 322
Mr. Lalonde .....	321
Mrs. Van Bommel .....	321
Mr. McNeely .....	322
Debate deemed adjourned .....	323

Continued overleaf





No. 8B

N° 8B

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Monday 24 October 2005

Lundi 24 octobre 2005



Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 24 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 24 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 19, 2005, on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** On the last occasion, the member from Erie-Lincoln had completed his comments. We now have questions and comments.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to see you here tonight.

In truth, I wasn't here for the comments made by the member, so I was just talking to him, as he sat down, about some of the comments he made. I know that if he had had a chance, he would have talked about the fact that under this government we have lost some 42,000 manufacturing jobs in the province of Ontario. I'll bet, given the riding that the member from Erie-Lincoln represents, that a couple hundred of those at least are in your riding, in your region or in your area. We have seen nothing from this government with respect to a strategy to deal with those good-paying, probably good pensions, good benefits—all those jobs that have been lost from the economy, not to mention the spinoff jobs that have been lost as well from those companies, small and medium, who would be supplying some of the bigger companies that have gone down.

He said to me that he also talked about energy policy, and I wasn't quite sure what he could have said because, really, I've got to tell you, member from Erie-Lincoln, your energy policy—well, it's the same as theirs. There has been no change. Private hydro brought in by the Conservatives is the same energy policy that has been kept by the Liberals. People are going to get their third hydro hike in April 2006, and what are they to do? We're already hearing from people who can't afford to pay for the two hydro hikes that they have already suffered under this Liberal government.

What is different between the Conservatives and the Liberals is that it was the Liberals in the last election campaign, Dalton McGuinty in particular, who went out with an election promise that said, "We would keep the hydro rate cap in place until 2006." That's what they promised in the last election. I recall, in the fall of 2003,

that one of the first pieces of legislation that went through this House was the Liberals taking off the rate cap a little bit and driving those prices up a little bit more instead of doing what really had to be done, which was to say that private power is an abysmal failure in the province of Ontario, as it has been in so many other jurisdictions, and we should get back to public power: power provided at cost that's affordable not just to ratepayers but to some of the big industrial consumers who are feeling the pinch right now.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** I'm delighted to make a few comments regarding the throne speech. I'm going to touch on a few basic issues, because I'll have the opportunity later on this evening to speak in more detail on the throne speech.

One of the things to remember, after the throne speech was made in this House a couple of weeks ago—some of the comments we've heard from the opposition were, "Well, there's nothing new." I'm not so sure what they expected to be "new." I guess the point I wanted to make in that regard is the fact that if we did have to shift gears and have something new, that meant that the road we're going down wasn't working or wasn't quite achieving what we committed to do.

When I address the House later on this evening and speak to some specifics on those things, you will see that what the throne speech really did is reaffirm the commitment that the Premier and this government made some two years ago, or prior to that, in our platform, that we wanted to see better health care, better education, prosperous communities. It took two years. That's not a very long time when you talk about initiatives that governments do, and we are reaping some of the benefits today.

1850

The messages we heard, mostly from the opposition, "There's nothing new"—I'm not sure what they were expecting. What we did say is that we're on track, we're going to keep on track and we're going to deliver on the commitment we made just over two years ago.

I'm delighted by the message that the throne speech gave Ontarians, and we're going to stay on target.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to comment on the speech made by the member from Erie-Lincoln on the throne speech. I know that the member from Erie-Lincoln is concerned with the average Ontarian. The average Ontarian is facing increased taxes and increased things they have to pay for, like chiropractors, physio, eye tests. He brought that up.



This throne speech we witnessed recently was just full of reannouncements and reannouncements. In fact, one that sticks in my mind is the 1,000 police officers that were reannounced again. By now, we should have about 5,000 new police officers since 2003, since the current government came to power, because they keep reannouncing these 1,000 police officers. In fact, we haven't seen any new police officers. In light of what has happened this weekend in Toronto with three more people who died, I think it's about time they started to hire some of these police officers they keep announcing.

I know the member from Erie-Lincoln has been concerned with the average Ontarian who is facing increased taxes, increased gas prices, increased oil and heating costs, natural gas costs.

This throne speech we saw—it's bad when the most notable part of it is a 15-day money-back guarantee on your birth certificate. All I can say is, based on the experience we've had in our constituency offices with trying to look after people to get birth certificates filled for them, that's just going to create more work for us. Because, now not only will they not get their birth certificate in 15 days, we're going to have to be getting their money back for them because they didn't get their birth certificate in 15 days. So it's going to be more work for the constituency offices as we try to fulfill yet another Liberal broken promise, which I'm sure it will turn out to be.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I love the opportunity to talk about what throne speeches do. More specifically—I've said this once before and I'll repeat it—in my research on throne speeches in the past, we looked at the directions or the changes that are going to be proposed by a government. What we're proposing and making is quite clear is that our priorities are staying exactly where we were when we first got elected: education, health care, better communities, healthier communities and getting rid of the deficit that was left for us. Those are the priorities that we said in this throne speech we're going to do. We made it quite clear that education is still the priority, that health care is still the priority. We continue to announce some of things that we've already done.

We've already made one major investment on hospices. That's a fantastic announcement. That, to me, is continuing where we want to move in health care.

Smaller class sizes: continuing where we want to move. All the research points us in that direction, and we know that that benefits our kids.

Best Start: The Best Start program is an intelligent way of dealing with making sure that kids are ready to learn before they even get to school. These are the types of programs that we've been instituting since we were elected.

In the throne speech, we're reinforcing what direction we're taking. We've got the ship moving and we're going to make sure it stays there. So what's so hard to understand about a throne speech laying out clearly that that's what we're planning to do?

What we need to have is an understanding from the public out there that we want to be judged on the outcomes of these programs that we're proposing. We've made it quite clear that, in 2007, let's line up and find out whether or not we've taken care of waiting times. We've set the foundation in this new announcement on the Web site and the reality of the complex problem of what wait times are all about. Now that the foundation has been established for what the minister is talking about, you can start looking at whether or not we've brought the wait times down. Quite frankly, that's what we want to be judged on, and that's what the Premier has said right from the very beginning. Take a look at the outcomes at the end of the day and find out if you want us back in office. I'm sure you'll say that you want us.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Erie-Lincoln has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I say to my colleagues opposite, if the throne speech, in the Dalton McGuinty dull Liberal vision, is just a reiteration of old promises, why do you have a throne speech? If you're saying the same thing over and over and over again and saying, "There's really been no progress, but we're really going to try to keep our promises," why have a throne speech? If there are no new ideas, if there's no bold vision of how you want to take on the problems affecting the province of Ontario today and for the next two years, then why do you have a throne speech?

My friend from Northumberland said, "Well, what did you want us to talk about in there?" aside from the dull, drab material we did. Well, how about gun violence in the city of Toronto? How about the summer of the gun? We saw more attacks last night. Not a word in the throne speech. How about the hydro supply debacle that increasing members of your cabinet are presiding over? There was no plan for new supply. Your projects are way behind. Why wasn't there something in there about the plan for the hydro supply that's impacting directly our pocketbooks and new jobs in the province of Ontario? How about the decline of our cross-border relationship? I know it's important to my colleague the Minister of Tourism, but there were no plans in there to try to address that. You talked about some old announcements you made a couple of years ago about Windsor and Niagara Falls, but nothing new about a major issue that affects us in Niagara and in the province as a whole.

What about the behemoth, this Toronto garbage issue? It continues to be trucked into Michigan with no plan, despite my colleague's description of the "amazing" plan. It's only that the emperor has no clothes in his amazing plan, no plan for Toronto garbage, except that in Michigan, Mount Trashmore grows taller and taller by the day. I think they should carve Dalton McGuinty's face into Mount Trashmore to commemorate the lack of decision-making, the lack of leadership and the lack of preparation for when that border closes.

Instead of talking about gun violence, the decline in our cross-border relationship and the decline in the economy, we find ourselves talking about birth certificate



gimmicks, pit bulls and junk food—a dull, drab lack of vision.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. Martel:** It's a pleasure for me to participate in the debate tonight. I want to begin by saying that my view is that the throne speech was underwhelming in its support and content, and that's about as generous as I can get in terms of my view of what I saw. I really wondered why the government even bothered to have it in the first place. All I saw was a rehash of promises that have been made and have yet to be kept. I saw some promises that have been made and aren't going to be kept under any circumstances. I guess the best that can be said is that some of those few new commitments, like the money-back guarantee for birth certificates, that the government focused on really now have an opportunity to become more broken Liberal promises. So if that's what the value of the throne speech was, I guess that's what it will prove to be.

I just want to start by talking about northern Ontario. My colleague from Parry Sound-Muskoka is here. I see some other northern members. Here's what the government had to say about northern Ontario on page 15: "To further enhance the northern economy, the government is supporting economic development through grow bond loans...."

Let me deal with grow bond loans first. They were announced at least one throne speech ago, maybe two, and at the time—I don't have the press release; I wish I did—the government set an amount that they hoped to raise in northern Ontario through the grow bond initiative. The reality is that the government has raised less than half the amount of money that it wanted to raise in the first press release it issued on grow bonds when it was first announced probably two throne speeches ago. You know what? Just because the government announces it again in this speech doesn't make it any better and doesn't get any more money in. People are not enamoured of grow bonds. They're not interested; they're not participating; they are not there. You've got half the money that you said you were going to get, or that you hoped to get, when you talked about it in the first place. Why are you talking about it again? It didn't get any better the second time.

What else did the government say? "[We're] supporting job creation through the northern Ontario heritage fund...." Governments have been supporting job creation through the northern Ontario heritage fund for as long as I can remember—for as long as I've been a member, for goodness' sake. It was started under the Liberals, it was continued under us, these guys did some different things with it and it went back to the Liberals. The northern Ontario heritage fund has been in existence for as long as I've been a member, and that's 18 years. So there's nothing new there with respect to some new, bold, dynamic, creative idea to deal with dramatic job loss in northern Ontario.

What else did the government say? "Attracting anchor investments through the GO North strategy...." Now, that's an advertising and marketing program. I think it

was announced two throne speeches ago, maybe a budget ago, but it certainly isn't new and isn't innovative. I don't know how much money the government has actually invested in this. They wouldn't want to be marketing and advertising our forest industry in northern Ontario these days, because it's nothing to write home about. I'm going to get into that a little bit further on in the throne speech. This GO North strategy: We've heard about that. Been there, done that with this government, and I don't see much in the way of dramatic change.

#### 1900

Investing in northern infrastructure: Let me start there. I can only assume, because the government didn't expand on it any further in the throne speech, that they might be referring to the money that the Minister of Natural Resources has announced on two different occasions for the forestry sector. The problem is that the government is completely out of touch and missing in action when it comes to the devastation in the forestry sector in northern Ontario right now.

Let me just give you an idea of the devastation so far. This comes from the minister's own council, the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness. What's clear from the report is that literally thousands of jobs have been lost. A total of 2,200 direct jobs have been lost over the past two years from northern Ontario forest-dependent communities, and further mill closures will be economically devastating on top of the losses to date. The report says, "Some 12 mills across northern Ontario have been identified at risk. The loss of these production facilities would reduce employment in the north by 7,500 direct jobs and 17,500 indirect and induced jobs." Further, "Southern Ontario would lose an additional 13,000 indirect jobs." That's because much of the engineering work, information technology and supply and financial services work is done in southern Ontario for the northern forestry industry.

Let's just look at some of the communities that have been affected by this devastation under this Liberal government.

Neenah Paper, Terrace Bay: 130 jobs gone. Abitibi Consolidated in Kenora closed, this weekend, paper machine number 9: 150 jobs gone. Paper machine number 10 is now idled indefinitely as the steelworkers—not this government; the steelworkers—are in negotiations to try to find a buyer to run those two machines. It should be the job of this government to be on top of that, and it's the steelworkers who are moving and shaking now to try to save jobs in this community. Cascades in Thunder Bay: 150 jobs gone. Norampac in Red Rock: 175 jobs gone. Columbia Forest Products, Rutherglen veneer plant: 63 jobs gone, beginning October 17, 2005; gone. Weyerhaeuser in Dryden: 385 jobs gone, including the ones at the sawmill. Excel in Opasatika: 78 sawmill jobs gone. Domtar in Chapleau: 67 sawmill jobs gone. Cornwall, southern Ontario: 390 jobs gone.

Do you know what? This government is missing in action. Thousands of people are going to lose their jobs in northern Ontario, and this government does nothing.



When I was Minister of Northern Development and Mines, 21 sawmill companies came to us in 1993 at the height of the recession and said, "Our loans are going to be called from the bank because the economic situation is so critical. We're going to be in a position pretty soon that we're not even going to make payroll."

Some 21 sawmills, almost 21 communities—in some communities there were more than one at risk—and our government, through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., put money on the table to save those 21 companies and to save all those jobs. Where is this government when it comes to all of the mills that are going down and all of the communities that are going to be devastated?

Here's the government's response. The minister in June, when he released the competitiveness paper, announced about \$350 million in loan guarantees for mills so that they can modernize their mills and respond to the challenges.

The challenge facing the forestry industry is not their mills. So many of these mills have modernized because they were trying to get their product out the door. The problem is the high hydro rates that are choking them, and this government doesn't want to do anything about it.

The minister comes forward in June and, as a response to this crisis—it shows you how out of touch he is—announces \$350 million in loan guarantees so that companies can go out and borrow even more money and rack up even more debt for a modernization they don't need.

My leader found out in estimates less than three weeks ago that this government hasn't even got an application form in place for this so-called loan guarantee program, hasn't even established criteria for any one single company that might want to apply if modernization was really their problem, and indeed it's not. But this government, five months later, after announcing \$350 million in loan guarantees—this government's Ministry of Natural Resources hasn't even put together an application form for a company that might want to apply to increase their debt even more. I can't imagine which company that might be, but that's how far the ministry has gotten on this.

Then a couple of weeks ago, the minister goes to Thunder Bay and announces a second package. Well, the first package we don't even have an application form for; the second package doesn't respond to the critical problem that is facing our industry in northern Ontario, and that is a problem of high electricity prices. Let me give you an example. I'll use the mill in Kenora—the mill in Kenora that was just shut down this weekend, paper machine number 9, OK? Kenora has no fewer than five power dams surrounding it. Some are 20 kilometres away, some 40, one 50. All of these dams, all five, produce electricity for under \$20 a megawatt, and yet as a result of McGuinty government policy, these mills are paying \$80 a megawatt for that electricity—four times the cost to produce that electricity on those dams that are within 20, 30 and 50 kilometres of that particular mill. So what are these companies doing? They're going to Manitoba and they're going to Quebec, because there they can

be sure of getting a hydro rate that is reasonable, that actually reflects what it costs to produce, not that reflects the cost to produce plus the cost that the private sector wants to add in order to get as much money as they can out of it.

Meanwhile, Michigan and Wisconsin are paying \$40 and \$45 a megawatt. The mills in Quebec that I referred to are paying about \$35 a megawatt. It's no wonder that we have a crisis in northern Ontario. The wonder is why this government doesn't want to understand, refuses to understand or maybe understands and doesn't want to do anything about it. It is their policy of high hydro rates that is driving the northern forestry economy into the ground. I say to this government: Money for loan guarantees—the industry didn't ask you for that, because that's not what they need. What they need is for you to do something about high hydro rates.

It's interesting—I got a letter from the chamber of commerce. The chamber of commerce in Sudbury is not known for usually supporting New Democrats, but I got this interesting letter from the chamber of commerce—a copy of a letter that was sent to Dalton McGuinty on October 11. It says the following:

"On behalf of the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, I wish to express our concerns with recent announcements regarding the state of the forestry industry and its future. Municipal, industry and union leaders agree that, for many reasons, the future of the forest industry is uncertain at best. Some issues are beyond the control and influence of industry management or local governments and can only be rectified by a change in provincial government policies and decisions.

"Forestry is the province's second-largest industry and source of employment. It has grown to that level without government financial aid, incentives or tax breaks as have been provided to other sectors.... The forestry industry is not requesting financial aid, but is asking for decisions which affect the industry to be made in a timely manner, energy solutions to be identified and implemented and fibre commitments to be made."

They end by saying: "The recommendations from the Minister of Natural Resources Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness require the support and action of the provincial government to ensure there is a future for many communities. The impact of a crumbling forestry industry will not only cripple many northern communities, it will be devastating to the province's economy as a whole."

I agree with the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, and I call on this government to look at the real problem facing the industry—that is, the problem of high electricity rates—and, for goodness' sake, to respond in a positive way before we lose more mills, more jobs and before more northern communities are put at risk because of this government's private electricity scheme.

Let me look at the government's promise around birth certificates, if I might, for a moment. Our office is now spending as much time dealing with birth certificates as we have with the WSIB or the Family Responsibility



Office. That is nothing to write home about, because I can tell you we spend inordinate amounts of time dealing with the WSIB and the FRO. For the last two years now, our volume of work related to birth certificates, delayed birth registrations, name changes—the whole nine yards—has consumed the work of one of my full-time staff; almost consumed her work entirely. This government comes forward in the throne speech, promises us a money-back guarantee—let me just read it into the record: “Later this year, Ontarians who fill out birth certificate applications on-line will get their certificate within 15 days—or they will get their money back.” Do you know what? This government is going to rue the day that it made this promise. This government is going to regret that they made this promise in this throne speech, because this government cannot deliver on this promise. This will be another broken promise, and God knows the Liberals don’t need any more broken promises; they’ve broken enough.

#### 1910

This government is going to lose even more money trying to refund the money that they can’t get to people in the first place because they can’t get their birth certificates on time. This government is going to lose money on this scenario, because we have seen in our office no positive change whatsoever to indicate that the government is in any way, shape or form capable of getting birth certificates back to people who go on-line to file for them. We’ve seen no change. It remains the highest volume of caseload in our office.

This begs the question, what about the second-class service that people who go don’t have access to the Internet get when they have to file longhand and file a long form? How come they can’t get their birth certificates back in 15 days when they Purolate their package to Thunder Bay? What’s wrong with the folks who don’t have access to the Internet and can’t file on the Internet? Are those folks in my constituency somehow second-class citizens because they can’t file that way? They need their birth certificates too. They need to get the birth certificates for their newborns. Some of those people are looking for birth certificates because they’re going to work outside of the province and need them to get other licences somewhere else. How come they don’t get 15-day service too, if they are not lucky enough to be able to file on the Internet? That’s a huge problem in Thunder Bay. We know that. Anybody who has an office that does any work in this regard knows that. So how is the government ever going to be able to clean it up for those people who file on-line, and if you can clean it up for the folks who file on-line and get them their birth certificate in 15 days, how come you can’t do something about all the other folks who don’t have the luxury of filing via the Internet?

I hope the government can live up to this promise. It might ease some of the workload in my office with respect to this issue. But I’ve got to tell you that I see nothing in what’s going on right now in our office with respect to this to give me any hope, any inkling of

confidence that this might be cleaned up, at least for people who are applying on-line. So we wait to see what will happen.

The government just referenced very briefly in the throne speech its ReNew Ontario program. I want to focus on this for one second: “Your government has launched a five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan called ReNew Ontario.” Of course, part of ReNew Ontario is for this government to ask the private sector to do some private financing of hospitals in the province. Indeed, this government has been out making announcements that a number of hospitals in Ontario, including my own Sudbury Regional Hospital, are now going to be privately financed.

I am opposed to private financing of hospitals. And do you know what? Dalton McGuinty was opposed to private financing of hospitals before the last election too. This is what he had to say—I think it’s worth repeating—from the *Ottawa Citizen*, Wednesday, May 28, 2003, before the last election: “What I take issue with is the mechanism. We believe in public ownership and public financing [of health care]. I will take these hospitals and bring them inside the public sector.” I thought he meant public sector financing of these projects too, but, oh, no, no. But let’s go on. What else did Dalton McGuinty say in the *Ottawa Citizen*, same day, May 28, 2003? “Mr. McGuinty warned recently that if the Liberals are elected in the provincial election now expected in the fall, they will stop private sector financing of hospitals, the so-called P3s, which the Conservative government is pushing as the way of the future.” Key words: “stop private sector financing of hospitals.”

It went on to say, “Mr. McGuinty believes that public-private sector partnerships in health care would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional arrangements.” And Mr. McGuinty is absolutely right. He was right before the election; he’s right now. The question is, why is he breaking this promise and why isn’t he publicly financing these hospitals and hospital redevelopments just like he promised?

This is what he said during the election. So we’ve got some quotes before the election; now we’re right into the middle of the election—pretty close to the end, as a matter of fact: September 24, 2003. He told the *Ottawa Citizen*: “Ontario Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty has said that the ROH”—the Royal Ottawa Hospital—“expansion will go ahead because Ottawa needs a new psychiatric hospital, but a Liberal government would cancel the deal with the private consortium because public-private partnerships are a waste of money.”

He is absolutely correct. They are a waste of money, because when the private sector goes out to borrow, they have to borrow at a higher interest rate than the government gets. So through the life of that mortgage, be it 20 or 30 years, we are paying more each year, every year, in and out, for a higher mortgage rate than if the government went and did the borrowing. Secondly, the private sector factors in its profit margin. It’s not doing this for free; it’s doing this to make some money. Of



course that's why they're interested. Of course that's why they're going to line up at the door. So factor in their 15% profit margin and now the price is really starting to jack up over a 30-year mortgage. Then this government says it's going to also add in a risk premium, and that's going to ensure that these projects are delivered on time and on budget.

So now we have three factors that are driving the price up far more than the price would have ever been driven up if the government itself, in the traditional way, had gone and financed these projects and paid off those costs over a 30-year debenture.

I've heard people talk about the 407. Our government borrowed the money for the 407. It was not privately financed. It was not. And here is this government moving on this scheme not only to have a private sector consortium involved in the management but in the financing as well.

Dalton McGuinty was right before the election; he's right now. Our hospitals should be publicly financed, not privately financed. I wish he'd live up to his promise soon.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London—Fanshawe):** I'm honoured and privileged to stand up again to speak in support of the throne speech tonight because the throne speech is about strengthening Ontario's economic advantage so we can meet the challenges and seize these opportunities. I hope that I get a chance later on tonight to speak in detail on why we are supporting the speech from the throne. It's very important because it outlines our priorities. People are talking about "nothing new in it." That's correct. We don't want anything new in it, but to maintain what we said when we got elected, what we said in the past, what we've been working on for the last two years.

I was listening to the member for Nickel Belt talking about so many different issues, talking about people who went away from the province, not creating jobs, not creating opportunities for young people to work. As a matter of fact, there are many statistics showing that unemployment in the province of Ontario is lower; it's at the best stage. As a matter of fact, the employment rate is the best ever for the last 10, 15 years. It's a good indication, because our government is investing in and creating jobs, investing to support and maintain the job opportunities in the province of Ontario, from the auto sector to small manufacturers to small agencies to help people find a job. I think it's a good indication.

Also, I heard her talking about the birth certificates and our promise to give people birth certificates as soon as possible. I know from our office that it's a lot different since we got elected until now. The process is going faster and quicker and people are happier because they receive their birth certificates faster and quicker and they're getting good service in our offices.

Talking about the Web site: Certainly, we have a Web site, we have a computer. If someone doesn't have access to a computer, doesn't have access to the Internet, our

office is open for them to help them out to file their applications. That's what we were elected for, and hopefully we'll continue to do the same job to help our constituents.

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I wanted to just say a few words following along on the comments of my friend from Erie—Lincoln, because he mentioned that there's nothing in the throne speech on crime. What a sad commentary it is today, when we've had three more young men shot dead over the course of the weekend. Today, in the city of Toronto, we had a shooting take place at the intersection of Bloor and Sherbourne in morning rush-hour traffic—people in their cars having to dodge bullets—and on it goes.

**1920**

It came to my attention that maybe there was a typographical error in the throne speech in that His Honour was reading something that didn't say what it meant to say. It said that we are going to be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. Based on all the neighbourhoods I visited this summer, which were many, and listening to the people, what's really going on here is that when Dalton McGuinty is being asked to provide more police so that they can spend some time in the neighbourhoods forging proper relationships with the young people, the people from the Liberal government, including Premier McGuinty, are saying, "Tough; tough for you that there are no police officers"—not a hundred, not a thousand, not one. When it comes time for the people in those neighbourhoods to say that they want the justice system fixed, as they've been saying to me, so that people aren't arrested one day and back in the neighbourhood the next morning, or allowed out on bail so that they're back in the neighbourhoods causing trouble again—on bail and on parole, the parole board we're going to give away to the federal government—Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals say, "Tough." When it comes time to have a really thorough, comprehensive, coordinated youth strategy, not the little smattering of projects that were referred to today in answers to questions—non-answers to questions—Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party say, "Tough."

So that's what they're saying; it's correct. Actually, the word "tough" should have been in the throne speech. They just should have put it forward the way they're putting it forward to the people of the city of Toronto and every other community in this province, like Hamilton, where they had a shooting over the weekend: "You care about crime; you want more police; you want to fix the justice system; you want more programs for kids? Tough; you're not getting them from Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party."

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I'm pleased to rise tonight to make a few comments on the fine speech of the member from Nickel Belt.

I just want to say that if there's anything good about this throne speech, it's who was actually in attendance that day. I do want to compliment the fact that someone had the common courtesy to invite someone with the



influence and respect that Major-General Richard Rohmer had when he was here. He's become a friend of law and order in our country, he's a spokesperson for the armed forces in many cases and he's a World War II veteran. Of course, this being the Year of the Veteran, it was nice to see that Major-General Rohmer was invited here and acknowledged in the throne speech. I also want to point out that it was interesting to see him because, just a few days prior to that, I had met him at the commissioner's mess dinner up at Base Borden. He was there with his OPP mess uniform on and spoke about his time here at Queen's Park, his values as a veteran and the respect he has for Ontario.

I will be speaking on the throne speech a little bit later on this evening. I wanted to put out my positive things about the speech now, because they're the only positive things I've seen in it. All I've really seen was a government that had made, I think we calculated, 60 reannouncements in the speech. As the member from Erie-Lincoln said, why would you have a throne speech if it's only going to be reannouncements? Why would you do that?

I can tell you why. When they adjourned the House, they got rid of nine question periods—nine question periods where Dalton McGuinty didn't have to face John Tory, nine question periods where they didn't have to face the opposition. That's actually why they delayed it nine days. That is the real reason there was a throne speech this year.

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** It's my pleasure to join the debate this evening. The last evening I stood up and spoke on improving the health of our people, and that was in the throne speech. Tonight I take pleasure in speaking about the highlight, the education and skills of our people, and I wanted to talk about something I'm very proud of in my community of Brampton Centre. On October 14, I went to the Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, where they officially opened their doors to the Sheridan Centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Design Technologies. This is an 18,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art centre which will train students and workers in the latest design and manufacturing technologies and help address the shortage of skilled labour in Ontario.

The manufacturing sector is tremendously important in the GTA economy. One out of every six jobs in Ontario is related to manufacturing, and in Brampton that number rises to almost one out of every three jobs. This new facility will play an important role in keeping the GTA manufacturing sector competitive by ensuring they have access to the ongoing supply of highly skilled workers that they need. Having the centre in Brampton will go a long way toward supporting our local manufacturing sector.

This centre was built with \$2.9 million in support from our government's Ministry of Economic Development and Trade's strategic skills investment program. Some \$2.5 million came from the city of Brampton, \$1.5 million in grants from local manufacturers and a long-

term commitment by Sheridan College and its students. Its mission is to help and keep the current and future needs of the GTA manufacturers in mind by providing them with skilled workers.

Dr. Robert Turner, who is the president and CEO at Sheridan, believes this centre will provide some of the most skilled and capable workers and graduates in Ontario. The centre represents an innovative solution to a growing problem and is a testament to the shared goals and co-operation between Sheridan, the two levels of government and local industry.

We expect this centre to be a catalyst, and I look forward to speaking about it again in the future.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Nickel Belt has two minutes in which to respond.

**Ms. Martel:** I want to thank the member from London-Fanshawe, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the member from Simcoe North and the member from Brampton Centre for their contributions.

I just want to follow up on one thing that was said in response by the member from London-Fanshawe. I have no problem with people coming into our office for help with birth certificates; we're doing that all the time. The issue is, why is it that people who come into our office with a birth certificate that's done in the long form are now going to expect different treatment—worse treatment—than those who have the luxury of doing this on-line? If you can generate a birth certificate in two weeks by someone doing that on-line, why can't you provide that same kind of service to someone who is sending in a long-form birth certificate to the Registrar General's office? That's the question this government has to respond to: Why is it that some folks are going to get a preferred or priority service for their birth certificate, while others who don't have access to the Internet won't? There's something wrong with that. This whole office needs to be cleaned up, not just for some, but for everybody.

Although the member from Brant didn't have a chance to make a comment on my remarks, he did say something in his earlier remarks that struck me. He said that—I'm going to paraphrase, and he's going to correct me if I'm wrong—essentially a throne speech outlines the direction that the government is proposing; it's an indication of where they want to head. I have to assume from that that if something isn't in the throne speech, it's not a priority and the government doesn't have any inclination or desire to deal with it.

In northern Ontario, we are getting clobbered by high gasoline prices, high hydro rates and high natural gas prices. The government said absolutely nothing about any of these things in the throne speech. In opposition, the Liberals had no less than seven private members' bills to do something about gas prices. Two of the people who had those bills are in cabinet now. The Liberals have now been in government for two years, and we haven't seen hide nor hair of any of those private members' bills. This government has done zero on gas prices. I wish the throne speech had said something about that, because



now I really know you have no intention of doing anything about those high gas prices.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Rinaldi:** As I indicated before, it's certainly my privilege to take part in this debate, and I'll be sharing my time with the member from Sault Ste. Marie.

I think we need to remember some fundamental ideas. When we were elected to this House, we had a vision. We found some challenges at the outset, and that is certainly no secret. In just two short years, when you look at spans of governments, I think we've made some drastic changes. As I indicated in my comments before, I'm going to expand on some of the things I touched on in the short two minutes.

Just to reiterate some of the highlights of our speech, to reinforce our message for the well-being of Ontarians, we want to strengthen the education and skills for the people of Ontario. It's very important. We were falling behind. We are in a world economy today.

Smaller class sizes: When you talk about how huge the education sector is, in just two short years I can tell you I get teachers in my riding calling me, or when I meet them in the streets and in the shopping malls they're saying, "It's great. Now I have more time to spend with those kids." It was a wonderful initiative we started. The fact that some children who went through the education process—I mean, we're not all the same; I can speak from experience. Some kids are not all that academically astute, and we left them by the wayside. We are going to have alternative diplomas so that those kids can excel in what they're good at. I could go on and on.

**1930**

The investment that we committed when it comes to higher education, the Reaching Higher slogan that our Premier uses over and over again: an investment in post-secondary education that hasn't been seen in this province in years—\$6.2 billion.

The other sector that is probably one of the—I should go back a bit. Two things inspired me to run for a position as an MPP: health care and education. I just briefly spoke about education. The other one is health care. It's something that's drastically needed in our communities.

The legacy of the previous government was to close down hospitals. I happen to live in a riding where that happened, and I know the hardships some of those folks went through. But I can tell you that today, once again in the very short time that we've been here, we've seen increases in CAT scans, cancer surgeries and cataract surgeries. I have a hospital in my riding, and I'm very proud today to say that from the Web site, the Northumberland hospital in Cobourg is fourth in having the shortest wait times. It's the one that has the shortest wait time in the central east LHIN area. We just committed to give that hospital another \$75,000 to provide 100 more cataract surgeries for our community. Those are the initiatives that were lacking and that fell behind.

The creation of family health teams: I'm going to talk about that a little bit later on, because I have some first-

hand experience of the benefit that those family health teams have generated in our community.

Most important, we have a commitment that we know prevention—what's the saying? An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of gold, or whatever the saying is. And we've committed. In public health, we've uploaded some of the costs that those municipalities have been faced with. Having been in municipal politics for 12 years, I know the hardship we were faced with. I tell you, it's the first sign of uploading by our government, and that's to prevent people from going to the hospital so that people are healthier.

Those are just some of the highlights of the throne speech, amongst many others, that are so vital to our communities.

One of the comments I'd like to make in general before I talk about some specifics is getting the fundamentals right. In just two short years, Ontarians have worked very hard to help this government reduce the provincial deficit from \$5.6 billion to \$1.6 billion, and we need to thank the hard-working people of Ontario who have seen the vision of this government and put their right foot forward to make that happen.

The province for the first time ever had some vision. I was honoured, as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, to launch a \$30-billion infrastructure investment in Ontario, ReNew Ontario—the decrepit roads, the 100-year-old water pipes that are underground in some municipalities that we're dealing with. We have a \$30-billion plan so that the sectors can serve the people of Ontario along with this government.

In just two very short years, we brought over 2,200 megawatts of new power into the grid, and it's green energy, something we've been starving for in this province. Before our mandate is over by 2007-08, we'll have 9,000 megawatts of new energy in the grid, something that wasn't thought of in the last 15 years. We just sat on our laurels and let the infrastructure disintegrate.

In the energy sector again, I know I can tell you that people are telling me they are looking forward to smart meters, where they can manage energy use in their homes. That is coming in very short order.

We're hearing a lot of rhetoric from previous speakers about the guarantees we made on birth certificates. I tell you, it's about time that governments put their right foot forward. The private sector has been doing that for a long time. How often do you go and buy something, and if you don't get it in time, you don't take it and you get your money back. This is what Ontarians are accustomed to right across the private sector. They buy something; they want delivery of their goods.

I can tell you, the workload we had in my office in the riding of Northumberland to deal with the backlog of birth certificates when we first took power was scary. It was huge. But now we are delivering, and we are putting our seal of approval that in 15 days if you don't get your certificate, you will get your money back. Some people might think this is a joke, but it's an innovation on how



we deliver government and how we deliver services from the public sector.

We've worked very hard, and the private sector is reacting. I'm going to quote from one of the media here in Toronto, the *Toronto Star*. It says, "Wind Industry Putting Down Roots." I think that you will get the gist of it, when I read some of these quotes, why I believe the private sector is putting a lot of faith—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rinaldi:** I only have one minute left? Wow, time goes flying.

I'll just read quickly. This was an announcement made just last week about DMI Industries setting up shop in Ontario, in Fort Erie, to manufacture windmill towers. This is a brand new industry, not for Canada but for Ontario, and it will benefit all of us. Some of the comments that were made: Why did this company come to Fort Erie? Because they had confidence in the provincial government of the day to set some standards and to show some initiative that this is a place to invest.

In just two short years, regardless of what you hear, we've created close to 200,000 jobs in the province—and, I must say, good-paying jobs. When you get people, for example—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** Let me tell you, and this is a quote: "The fact that manufacturing is coming here is definitely a sign that Ontario is moving in that direction," said Deborah Doncaster, executive director of the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association."

As you can see, we set up a climate. Sure there are going to be ups and downs, but just look at what this government did. The throne speech of a couple of weeks ago just reaffirmed that we're going in that direction. Let me tell you, we're committed to staying in that direction. I know my friend from Sault Ste. Marie wants to continue this debate, and I thank the House for allowing me the time.

**Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie):** I thank the member from Northumberland, who led off our 20 minutes for this evening.

To pick up on a number of priorities in the throne speech, Strengthening Ontario's Economic Advantage—although some of the opposition members have criticized the throne speech, it's obvious that they refuse to recognize some of the major achievements that our government has made in the past two years. So I want to focus on a few of those for the time remaining, particularly in health care and education.

Today, as you know, we launched the new provincial Web site on wait times. For the first time ever in the province, Ontarians have the opportunity to take a look at where the hospital in their particular community stands in providing MRI scans, CT scans, hip, knee and joint replacements, and can get an understanding of how long the wait might be and whether services may be provided more quickly in another hospital. This transparency and accountability in launching this particular Web site

allows all Ontarians to see how their health care dollars are being spent.

We're not going to, like the past government has done, simply throw money at the health care system and say, "We'll see you next year at the next budget. We hope things get better," and nothing much changes. What we're doing is focusing on five key areas: cancer treatment; cardiac treatment; cataract surgeries; hip, knee and joint replacements; MRIs; and CT scans. Those are all very, very important services for Ontarians, and we want to make sure Ontarians see the improvements we are making in these areas. I know that in our particular community of Sault Ste. Marie, we announced today that CT scans in Sault Ste. Marie have virtually no wait time attached to them. We're making progress. We can all see the areas that we need to improve on as a benchmark to move forward, and we're going to do that.

**1940**

For the first time in many years, hospitals have received multi-year funding. Hospitals, for many years, clamoured and argued their case to the past government to no avail. They wanted multi-year funding to properly plan for services for Ontarians, and we've provided that. It's making a difference. You simply have to get out there and talk to some of the hospital administrators and some of the people who work at our hospitals, and they'll tell you that that makes a difference.

When it comes to physician supply, we're making significant efforts to undo some of the damage and some of the lost time on this file, where the past Conservative government—the government prior to that actually took the step of cutting seats in medical schools, one of the reasons why we're suffering from some of these lacks of physician supply today—dithered for eight years on this file and did very little to increase physician supply. We've gone from 90 to 200 seats for international medical graduates, and we're moving to fill those seats year after year. We've also increased medical school enrolment in the province of Ontario by 15%. We have funded and opened the first medical school in more than 30 years in the province of Ontario at a cost of about \$95 million, adding 56 additional medical school seats. We're hopeful, and I am, certainly, as a representative of a northern community, that some of those physicians are going to stay in northern Ontario. Overall, by 2007, our government will have increased the physician supply by about 23%, which is significant progress in my books.

When it comes to the file on nurses, while the past Conservative government referred to nurses as *Hula Hoop* workers, we now have 3,000 new jobs for Ontario nurses. We're repatriating nurses who left the province for other jurisdictions because of a government that did not believe the nursing profession was valuable to the people of Ontario. We are hiring additional nurses, and we're well on our way to our targets there. In fact, when it comes to full-time nursing in the province of Ontario, we've gone from 51% to 59% of nurses working full-time now.



When it comes to nurse practitioners, only 75 seats existed under the past government, and now we're at 150 new training spaces for nurse practitioners. Our government believes that nurse practitioners play a very valuable role in our health care system.

When it comes to family health teams, a \$600-million investment toward the creation of 150 family health teams in the province of Ontario is a tremendous step forward in leveraging the power of physicians to work in these teams and actually be able to meet with more patients and provide greater services to Ontarians. At present, we've got 69 of these family health teams in the first phase up and running, with more to come.

This family health team initiative, I know first-hand, is modelled after the Group Health Centre in Sault Ste. Marie that has existed for over 40 years—a family health centre that has had a history of using nurse practitioners and appreciating their services, that has had medical records for patients for a number of years. I know that after the election, one of the health minister's very first visits on the health care file for family health team development was to Sault Ste. Marie to meet with representatives at the Group Health Centre and learn more about that particular centre.

I think the shame in the whole Group Health Centre file is that under the past government, for nearly five years they had no contract. The government didn't believe in it, didn't want to work with them and was, in essence, attempting to dismantle the Group Health Centre. Our government has provided them with a new \$26-million contract, with a \$4-million increase to provide these services, because we know that the Group Health Centre in Sault Ste. Marie and family health teams all across the province of Ontario, in leveraging physician capacity, is the way we should be going. The Group Health Centre was also the recipient of a northern Ontario heritage grant to expand that particular centre, and also \$744,000 for vascular research intervention, because this is a centre that provides great research capacity. Our government believes in the centre and has put additional funds behind the research capacity of it.

To continue, public health care is another area that our government has shown its support for. The past model of the municipality funding 50% and the province funding 50% is strained. We have incredible new challenges with the types of health emergencies that we have been challenged with in the past in Ontario—SARS and West Nile—and we need to continue to be vigilant to ensure that we have the capacity in the province for our public health institutions to be able to respond in a timely way to meet these challenges. So we've increased our funding for public health from 50% to 75%, which is being phased in at present. If you talk to municipalities, they're certainly appreciative of this step forward.

When it comes to community-based health care, for too long we have spent time trying to invest in our hospitals and surgical procedures that are really at the outer end of the health care continuum. We need to try to provide more funding for community-based health care

organizations. Some of these health care organizations have not had base funding increases for 12 years. I ask the opposition, why have you overlooked these very important health care services in communities all across Ontario? Our government has risen to the challenge, and in two years, we've had significant investments in these areas of community-based health care: long-term care, home care, mental health services, supportive housing and the like.

We also introduced a \$156-million immunization program, because we think it's important that we vaccinate children with three additional vaccines. This is saving parents approximately \$600 per child. We on this side of the House think that's a good investment.

When it comes to the importance of our people and our resources, we've made some significant strides in education, such as four-year contracts for the first time ever in the province of Ontario. While past governments have chosen to pick fights with our teachers and challenge the education resources in this province, we're working with those individuals and our stakeholders to make education front and centre of our government's platform: smaller class sizes, the creation of a Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, learning to age 18 and over a billion dollars back into the education sector.

In northern Ontario, we have seen some significant investments, certainly in my community, with the announcement of a new hospital and \$26 million for the new Group Health Centre; a new truck traffic route to the international bridge, solving a problem of about 40 years of having transports come through the downtown of our community; \$1.5 million for the new Flakeboard plant; \$3 million for the new Sutherland Group technical centre, employing 1,200 new people there. The list goes on and on. I don't have enough time to continue to elaborate on these things, but I'm very proud of our government's record in the last two years and I look forward to the next two years of continuing to move this agenda forward.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** Tonight we're debating the throne speech. I don't know where they got this throne speech. The member across the way said they had a vision. I wonder what you were smoking or drinking the night that you had this vision, because obviously you didn't know what you were talking about.

You had about an hour-long speech, and most of it was about all of these wonderful things you've done in health care, but chiropractic services—gone, physiotherapy—gone, optometry—gone. That stuff's all gone. You forgot to mention that you took that away from the people so you could give something you wanted. You just wiped it out. Then, all of a sudden, you said, "We can't afford all that so we're going to tax you. Even though we said we wouldn't raise taxes, we're going to put more taxes on the people." What have you done now? You've taxed the people.



Then you got into education. Yes, you've done a very good job, and I'll give you credit for that, but that's about it, guys. It doesn't go anywhere else.

You forgot about rural and northern Ontario. In an hour-and-a-half-long speech, you mentioned rural and northern Ontario for maybe three minutes, if that's all we got. Where are all the rural members over there? Where are you? Do you not have any input into this government? Obviously not; obviously large urban Ontario has taken over this government and you forgot about rural and northern Ontario. There's nothing in it for them. They didn't even want to talk about farming. Oh, no, "The feds are going to look after that for us; they'll do that for us." So you just forgot about us.

Then you go on about how the taxpayers worked hard—yes, they did—and then you took their taxes to do all your little schemes. That's what you guys love to do: tax and spend, spend and tax. That's all you had. And then you got into your throne speech and told us about all your promises that you haven't kept, 60-some old promises in there. You will never get to keep all these promises. You've shown us that very well so far in your two years of doing basically nothing. So, folks, this is one of the worst throne speeches I've heard in 15 years.

1950

**Ms. Martel:** In response to the comments made by the members from Northumberland and Sault Ste. Marie, I have a couple of points. With respect to the birth certificates: I could be wrong, but I think this is a promise you're going to regret you made in this throne speech. I haven't seen a significant improvement in Thunder Bay. Despite the efforts of all the staff who are there, we have not seen a significant improvement in their ability to get birth certificates or name changes or anything like that out the door. I don't know what new technology the government is suddenly bringing in that is going to allow the government to now generate birth certificates, if they come in via the Internet, in two weeks. I don't know what this is all about, but I will be amazed to see it. I wish the government had been applying that technology long before now. That would have reduced a lot of the casework in my office from folks coming in, who phone, who fax, who mail, who do whatever it takes only to find that their cheque has been lost and their application form has been lost.

For goodness' sake, as I said earlier, it's now the issue that has as much volume in our office as the FRO and WSIB. Things haven't changed, and if you're going to make things so much better that you can get out birth certificates in two weeks' time, then you should do that for everybody who's applying for the birth certificate, not just those folks who are lucky enough to be able to do it by Internet. I don't know why you want to have two different sets of access, or two-tiered access for those folks who can apply electronically, because they have the luxury of doing that, and for those who still have to send in a long-form birth certificate application.

There was one small paragraph with respect to northern Ontario. It talked about three initiatives that

have already been announced—one that's been in place for over 18 years now. There was nothing new in this budget for people in northern Ontario. I wish that this government had something to say in the throne speech about high gas prices and how those are affecting people in the north, or high hydro rates and how those are hammering industry in the north, or high natural gas prices and how those are impacting residential consumers in northern Ontario. The government had nothing to say about any of that.

**The Acting Speaker:** There's a lot of conversation here, it's very hard to hear those who wish to be heard in this House because we can only hear you.

The member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** I just want to carry this conversation about the throne speech that bit further. The throne speech certainly talks about how we want to advance our plan for education and health care, our plan for infrastructure renewal, reduction of the deficit, innovation for this province and the profitable future and diversity of this province. But one of the things that was mentioned in the throne speech that we haven't heard a lot about is reform of the Drive Clean program. I had a constituent who, long before I was elected, was already telling me that there were major problems with the Drive Clean program. He told me that only one out of every hundred vehicles tested actually fails the test. What he was saying to me was basically that this was a waste of our resources, it was a waste of the \$35 that everybody pays every two years to have their vehicle tested, only to find out that it would pass anyway, and it was a waste of the resources of the dealerships and the garages that were doing the work.

That has come to a point where now, even the Provincial Auditor has said to us that this is a program that is not working properly and needs to be reformed. That is why in the throne speech we have said, and we have made a commitment, that we are going to do that. I applaud our government for taking that one on. It certainly is an issue in the dealerships where they have laid out major dollars in order to provide equipment that I'm told tends to break down quite a bit. I'm told they don't really trust the test.

So we now need to see that the program is working properly. This program was initiated in 1999 by the former government. I'm sure that the intent was good, but the fact is that the program is not working. As a government, in our throne speech, we said that we are going to reform that program. I'm glad to see we are doing that, and I know my constituents will certainly be happy about that.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** Is that a prop?

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** Yes.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, it isn't anything else. Thank you very much. The member for Perth–Middlesex has



confirmed that this is in fact a prop. The throne speech is a prop, because it wasn't much good for anything else.

I did want to comment on one little thing in the throne speech. They rolled this thing out like it was the reinvention of the wheel. They're going to have a money-back guarantee in this province. Isn't that wonderful: a money-back guarantee. If you don't get your birth certificate 15 days after applying on-line, you get your money back.

Here is the catch. The people out there should really be—it just adds to the cynicism. You can only apply on-line for a birth certificate if you're eight years of age or under. That's the only way you can apply on-line, because there are security concerns. You have to be eight years of age or under to get a birth certificate on-line. Those are not the people who are in a helter-skelter rush to get a birth certificate. When people are getting birth certificates for their children, they're not in that big a rush. I'll tell you who is in a rush: the person who needs a birth certificate so they can get a passport or they've got to travel or so they can get work. If you're getting work, do you know what? You're over the age of eight; you can't apply on-line. It's such a farce that you would waste people's time to put something like that in this prop. That's what it is, a prop.

They went even further, to have the member for Huron-Bruce ask a lobbed question in the House a couple of days later so the minister could say what a wonderful thing they were doing with birth certificates. It's a load of bunk.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Northumberland has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** I thank the members for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Nickel Belt, Lambton-Kent-Middlesex and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

I'm somewhat confused because both members from the opposition referred to our commitment regarding birth certificates. I'm just wondering, when we're sitting in this room here, how much our memory shrinks, because I remember when I first got elected just over two years ago—

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Are you sure you remember that?

**Mr. Rinaldi:** I remember the person I beat. Having said that, I can tell you that my staff was inundated trying to deal with birth certificates. I'm just wondering where their memory has been. I remember the minister at that time had to hire all sorts of extra people to deal with the backlog.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington):** A roomful.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** A roomful of people. So we've made extreme headway. If that's all they can talk about, the only thing I can conclude is that they really like the rest of the throne speech. That seems to be a real hang-up. We committed ourselves, even if we have a good service, to making it better by giving people their money back if we don't deliver. I guess they're against good government.

In my last 30 seconds here, there's something that I didn't have time to address, and that was the family health units and the commitment we made to the im-

provement. In my riding, there were two family health units announced in the first round. Both are making great headway. In one of them, there are two new doctors. Why? Because of the family health team concept. The other one is in the process of hiring a nurse practitioner. Why? Because of the family health team concept. I don't have people calling me at home right now who just moved into the community and who can't find a doctor. Those calls have almost depleted.

Thank you once again for the time.

2000

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Dunlop:** I'm extremely pleased to be able to rise this evening and take my turn in the rotation on the throne speech. There's not a lot in the throne speech, but I do keep a copy handy. I really thank the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke for allowing me to use his tonight.

There are a lot of things in the throne speech I wanted to zero in on, and there are a lot of things that aren't there. Some of the key things that I'd like to discuss tonight are environment, policing and rural Ontario, along with some of the things that are happening in my riding.

To begin with, I'd like to talk a little bit about the environment and what I don't see in the throne speech and how many things are being impacted here in the province of Ontario.

The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex made some comments about Drive Clean. What she said is exactly correct: It was introduced in 1999. It was always the intention, upon the introduction of the Drive Clean program, that after five years there would be a complete review of that system. Some people felt that after five years it could be eliminated; other people thought it could be expanded upon or reduced or the types of vehicles changed. That's exactly what's happening today. Probably a lot of the newer cars, cars within three or four years old, don't need Drive Clean. It's an expense and probably a waste of time for the owner to take it to the unit, and it's probably a waste of time for the garage. But there are older cars, of course, that do need that, and some heavier construction equipment. It may even apply at some time in the future to some construction equipment and agricultural equipment on farms as well. We don't know where we'll go with that, but there was always the intent to review it. If it's a positive thing that there is a review, if there are changes made, I would agree with that. I think we do need a review of it, but it was always the intention after five years. I wanted to put forward the former government's position on that.

I hope you don't eliminate Drive Clean, personally. I think the Drive Clean program is a great program. I can tell you one thing: I very seldom see cars running around the highway any more with a lot of black emissions coming out—the little diesel cars and that sort of thing. I just don't see nearly as many as I used to, and I think that's positive.

On the environment, one of the key areas the government has moved in is the introduction of the greenbelt



legislation. Now we understand that there's an expensive type of propaganda program—I think it's \$25 million, someone mentioned—by which the government is actually promoting the greenbelt.

I'm concerned about what's missing from the greenbelt legislation and where the government has what I consider to be a key role to play in the future, and they never mentioned anything in it.

One of the truly jewel lakes in the province of Ontario is Lake Simcoe. Many of the members in this House have ridings abutting Lake Simcoe. It's a key economic project. It plays a strong role in the economy of all our regions. Nothing will be impacted more by the greenbelt legislation than Lake Simcoe, as far as I'm concerned. We have tremendous growth in Durham region, all around York region, up to the cities of Barrie and Orillia. All through that area, we have strong growth—not as strong as it might have been in the GTA. But certainly source water protection, sewage disposal and storm water management will all have a huge impact on Lake Simcoe.

We had a Lake Simcoe event here the other night with a coalition and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. There was a group there—a lot of them are from my riding—called Ladies of the Lake. They have promoted a calendar. I think they've raised \$230,000 with that calendar to try to save the lake.

My problem is that in the throne speech, as we're talking about the direction that the government is going in next two years, I see nothing that would have anything do with saving some of our valuable resources like Lake Simcoe. The government mentioned a lot of specific programs and projects and stakeholders in the throne speech. Nothing was mentioned about Lake Simcoe. I'm going to tell you, it's going to take a lot of money to save that lake. It's going to take the resources of not only the Ontario government, not only the municipalities, but it's going to take the resources of the federal government as well.

I want to put it on the record, because I think we haven't heard the end of Lake Simcoe. I think it's going to be what I would consider one of the top environmental priorities that the government will face in the province of Ontario, not only this government but governments in the future. If there's anything we can do—if you're going to fed-bash over the \$23 billion, fed-bash and get the federal government to help out with Lake Simcoe and the Trent-Severn waterway. It's a heritage river in the province of Ontario and the lake is one of the most valuable lakes; the economic spinoff is about \$250 million a year on Lake Simcoe. We need help, or before long we're going to be able to walk on that lake. That's not a good sign. Not to blame you folks in particular, but in the throne speech there was nothing about Lake Simcoe.

That brings me to another area that I know has been a problem with the government: the Toronto garbage situation. I know the question has come up a few times in the House, but we absolutely have to get a plan in place in case the border is shut off. Since the throne speech

came out and since there have been some questions in the House, when I've gone out over the last couple of weekends, I've had a lot of folks ask that question of me: What is the government going to do? What is the plan?

I can tell you, they don't want Toronto's garbage in all the different counties, filling up the few landfills left. In fact, they don't want more landfills; they want to plan for an innovative new way of dealing with our waste management in the province of Ontario, whether that's some form of incineration or whether it's—I don't even know all the names of the different proposals that could be out there. We absolutely have to have that plan in place and brought to the floor of the Legislature.

That's just about as important as water source protection legislation. I know the minister has promised water source protection legislation for this fall. I hope there are complete public hearings. I see the parliamentary assistant over there nodding his head. We've talked about the problems with nutrient management regulations; we've talked about the problem with—last week I complained to you about the security guards' bill. Let's do something really good; let's make sure that this House, and not a bunch of bureaucrats, approves the regulations around water source protection. Let's make sure the public gets an opportunity to have committee hearings on the regulations around water source protection. You can't saddle the people with a huge expense in this case, because I think it's going to be an area we have to deal with.

I wanted to put those two issues regarding the environment out there in particular. We have a lot of work to do in the area of waste management, and the throne speech really didn't deal with it whatsoever. They talked about a clean environment and water source and all the nice cuddly, cozy things that people want to mention. But the citizens of the province of Ontario today—I think landfills are a thing of the past. I don't know how many times in this House I've read petitions on the site 41 proposal up in Tiny township. You know what? The ministry doesn't want to approve that, the county really doesn't want to approve it and the community doesn't want it, but there has been so much money spent over the past 20 years getting it to this final stage—

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Weren't you the warden then?

**Mr. Dunlop:** Actually, I can give you a little background on site 41. It was actually turned down by the original approvals branch in 1990, and the minister of the day—I believe it was Jim Bradley—reversed the decision to go back to that as the site. I was the warden in 1998 when one of the conditions came on. I know you'd like to blame it on me, but I can tell you that I am absolutely opposed to that site—water is bubbling out of the ground. There's a test well out there, and it would make you sick to think that somebody would ever want to put a landfill in that particular area. There's so much water in the ground bubbling out at that point.

**2010**

I've mentioned a number of times in this House that site 41 and other landfills like that across the province are



a thing of the past. I hope the minister, Ms. Broten, with the assistance of her parliamentary assistant, will get behind those communities and support their endeavours to not allow those types of landfills to go in where they could actually have an effect on the groundwater and contaminate the groundwater of those communities.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** The Adams mine.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Maybe that's true. I heard the parliamentary assistant mention the Adams mine. That was an alternative for Toronto's garbage. It was an approved site. I can tell you, if we're going to go down this road and start heckling over the Adams Mine Lake Act, when they excavated the mine, it filled up to a certain level with water. The minister called that a lake; that's what she described as a lake. I can tell you right now, if she would go up to site 41 in the township of Tiny and I excavated a hole five feet deep for two acres and it filled up overnight, would she call that a lake? She should call it a lake if she's putting on the same conditions that she did on the Adams mine lake. She won't listen to that. In fact, they won't make a decision on whether or not to approve it. They apparently are still fidgeting around with the final design. But I can tell you, the folks who live in the township of Tiny absolutely do not want site 41 approved.

When you get up here, your time sometimes goes very quickly. I've only got eight minutes left, and I've only got about a third of the things done that I wanted to talk about.

The other thing I did want to mention is the police file. I'm going to go back to the fact that I know Minister Kwinter and the Attorney General are under tremendous pressure to make cuts in the justice ministries. People in the ministries tell me that you're trying to cut \$300 million. So it's going to be hard to hire new police officers; it's going to be hard to fight gang violence and gun violence and all those things. But the bottom line is that we're in a time frame right now where we need a strong ministry more than ever, and I can tell you that the cuts we're seeing are not helping the police.

I know the minister mentioned again today that we're going to hire 1,000 new police. If we had started with the plan originally back in October 2003 and actually made some announcements and trained some cops in the first few months, even the first six months or eight months of the mandate, there would have been a good opportunity to have 300 or 400 police officers on the streets today. I'm wondering what the impact would have been on areas like crystal meth operations, gang violence, gun violence, the grow-ops, Internet luring and child pornography. I wonder where we would have gone with all that, if in fact we had more police today, as opposed to saying, "They're being hired and trained today. We might get them on the streets next summer. We'll start building for them next fall," or whenever it's going to be. I don't know what the situation is right now, but I can tell you that every day I open up a paper, especially on a Monday morning—it's a sad situation for a Canadian city to have to see the kinds of headlines we see almost every

Monday morning now. Today we've added, I guess, our 44th homicide of the year due to gun violence in the city of Toronto.

I've got to give our leader credit. John Tory has been nagging the minister and the Premier for the last nine or 10 months, trying to get some kind of summit, trying to get as many people as possible involved in this and to make some very positive steps, possibly calling a debate in this House for an evening, to do nothing but debate gun violence and gang violence, so that we can get behind this and try to come up with some solid recommendations that can be possibly financed partially by the province but be turned over so that our police services and our community leaders can actually take those recommendations and work with the government to save lives. I don't know how much longer we can go on with this. If we've got 44 lives now and we still have two months left in the year, are we going to see 60 or 70 or 80 young people lose their lives because of these terrible ways of dying? I'm behind my leader 100% on this, and I wish the Minister of Community Safety and the Attorney General would show that same kind of support.

One other thing on the 1,000 police officers that the province announced: I'm very disappointed in the fact that the Ontario Provincial Police, in general, received none of those officers—only those municipalities that have contract policing. So all the specialized units of the Ontario Provincial Police, like Project P, the Internet-luring areas, extra cops for highways and all the specific areas that the Ontario Provincial Police operate—none of those areas of the OPP received any additional funding.

A quick comment on the OPP: I want to put on the record, and I may ask to do it in a statement as well, that there is a new president of the Ontario Provincial Police Association. His name is Karl Walsh. He started last Friday. Karl will be responsible for all of the uniformed officers and all the civilian officers of the OPP. I wish Karl very well. It's a very difficult job. I thank former president Brian Adkin for a job well done. I believe Brian had the position for about 11 years and took the OPPA to one of the most respected police associations not only in our country but in North America. I wish Karl all the best, and I thank Brian for a job well done.

As I get toward the end of my time, I want to say that as a member of the opposition I'm disappointed in the throne speech. As I said a little earlier—and maybe I'm partially wrong on it, but I don't think I'm too wrong—I think part of the reason is that it avoided a few question periods. I think it was a total of nine when you do the leadoffs etc. I think that was an area where we should have been back here on September 26, but we weren't. With those dates we missed all those opportunities for question period, so I think that's one of the key areas for the throne speech. A bunch of reannouncements, that's for sure; there's no question about that.

I come from a rural municipality—rural/urban with lots of little communities, one city and a couple of towns. I can tell you that one of the things we are so concerned about in our area is the loss of jobs at the Huronia



Regional Centre. Mr. Speaker, I know that you, as a member, have visited the Huronia Regional Centre in the past and know the types of services that are provided there. I am extremely disappointed, as the member for Simcoe North, that without the proper services being in place, we're going to move, in my particular community, 331 of the most vulnerable people in our society out of a facility that has state-of-the-art care, state-of-the-art conditions, state-of-the-art health care professionals and employees, and we're going to move them to areas where the parents and the family members are not happy. Not only were they not consulted, but they don't agree with any of these moves. I still think this whole process should be reviewed.

I think there's a real problem in the fact that, yes, we've closed them down in the past, but the people we've discharged into the communities through previous institutional changes and closures certainly have not had the severe conditions, both mentally and physically, that the folks have who are in the three remaining facilities today. So I want to put that on the record.

I know this is a prop, Mr. Speaker, but the family members of the Huronia Regional Centre, the Huronia Helpers, are selling calendars. They're trying to pay for their legal costs. They are challenging the government on this move, and I fully support them because I don't think the services and the funding are in place to help these people. I wanted to put that on the record tonight.

As we wind down, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to have this part of the rotation. I look forward to further debate on the throne speech. Of course, our party won't be supporting the throne speech, but we are here, as the opposition, to bring out the positives and the negatives that the government is proceeding with.

I thank you for this opportunity and look forward to any comments and questions that members in this House may have tonight.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Martel:** Let me say a couple of things with respect to the remarks that were made by the member from Simcoe North.

Let me deal with the environment and garbage first. It won't be any surprise to him that our party was very much opposed to the proposal that was actively considered under his government to ship Toronto's garbage to the Adams mine in northeastern Ontario. It was our view that the environmental assessment that was done on the site left a lot to be desired, and maybe that's the best description I can make of it, that there was from our perspective a great deal of political influence in the scope and shape and form of that particular environmental assessment, and we were very concerned, extremely concerned, about the possibility of that site actually being used for Toronto's garbage.

2020

Having said that, I look at the world today and see that we have a serious issue with respect to the possibility of other borders being shut off for Toronto's garbage, and I don't see a clear strategy on the part of this government

to deal with this issue. I can say very clearly that if the proposal is going to be to recreate or bring back the Adams mine site as a possible dumping ground for Toronto's garbage, we will be very vehemently opposed to that again. I hope that is not at all what the government has in mind, and I'll say now that that's where we would be. However, if that's not what the government has in mind, it would be good to know exactly what you are going to do. This is a serious issue.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It is.

**Ms. Martel:** I don't have to tell you that, Mr. Wilkinson. I'm sure you're hearing about it on a regular basis. I remain very concerned that I don't see a very coherent, coordinated strategy to deal with what is a very, very serious environmental issue. I hope that strategy is coming very soon.

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** I rise today in support of the throne speech, and I'm delighted to focus in on one area where I think we've made great strides and where our government has certainly shown real, positive change across the province, and particularly in my riding, and that's the area of education. We see an unprecedented investment over the next five years of \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education, which is only good news for Nipissing University and Canadore College in my riding of Nipissing. These two institutions are important institutions in my community and add so very much to the diversity and depth of my community.

I also want to talk about the secondary and primary schools in my area. We have been privileged to have the Minister of Education visit us a couple of times over the last year, and we've celebrated the hiring of 25 new teachers over the last two years in our four school boards, which is just great news for all of our students. It means smaller class sizes, it means more attention to the students and better outcomes for all of our students. We've also seen an investment of over \$500,000 dollars in textbooks and library books in our schools in the last two years, a huge improvement over what we've seen in the past.

I would just like to address for a moment the proposal in our throne speech of an alternative diploma. In our area, that's going to mean so very much. Last spring, I had the privilege of meeting with the Minister of Education with a class at West Ferris Secondary School, a shop class. There were about 24 students in that class, 24 guys. Many of them said that they would not still be in high school if it wasn't for that shop class, if they didn't have that alternative, that opportunity. Of that class, about seven of them were going on to Canadore College because they'd had the opportunity through a partnership with Canadore College to see what the college had to offer in the shop area, in the trades area. Canadore is investing greatly, and we're investing through Canadore greatly, in our apprenticeships, in our trades programs across the province, and the students of Nipissing and the students of my area and all of Ontario are benefiting from those investments. I'm proud to serve in a government that's investing in our future, in our children.



**Mr. Yakabuski:** I want to comment on the address of my colleague from Simcoe North, and I want to comment on a specific portion, and that is crime here in Toronto. You know, what you had here all summer long was the David and Dalton dance, where they skirted that issue. They don't want to talk about it. First of all, "It's the Americans' fault; the guns are coming from the United States." Then they got on this social thing, "We can heal all that if we have some sort of a program." The problem is they just don't want to face the facts about crime and the reasons for crime here in Toronto. They feel that they can hide behind the sociologists who tell them, "It's really society's fault. We've got to somehow do something." What we want to do is give these criminals excuses for continuing to break the law. That's what this government and the mayor of Toronto would really like to do on crime in the streets of Toronto.

What they're failing to face is that if you want to deal with crime you must deal with the criminals. They've danced all around that. They don't want to face the truth about dealing with criminals here in the city of Toronto. There was a record number of murders here in Toronto in 2005, but they want to just tread easy all the time. You've got to send these thugs, these criminals, to minimum sentences of 10 years in jail and throw away the key. "We don't even want to talk about your excuses or your reasons or your problems." If you do a crime with a gun here in Ontario, you should be in jail for 10 years. That's the problem in this city: They want to find a reason to blame somebody else for these—they're not kids; they're in their 20s. They're hardened. Their life is going out and intimidating people and taking what they've got and, if necessary, shooting and killing them. And this government doesn't want to do anything about it.

**Mr. Levac:** I listened carefully to the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I'll get to him in a second, but I want to deal with the member for Simcoe North, who gave us a reasoned response to the throne speech. One of the points he brought up that I totally agree with him on is his acceptance that we're heading in the right direction when it comes to taking care of the environment—the greenbelt legislation—and the environment in general. The fact that we're going to have watershed management, water protection at source, the fact that we're taking a look at what really does pollute our water from the source, which feeds into the lake that he's talking about, is a very reasoned approach. I'm glad that he pointed that out.

As far as the previous member's two minutes, when we talk about crime, it's rather interesting, the characterization that he makes of the people who have made solutions part of their mandate. To characterize the mayor of Toronto as somebody who doesn't care is not very fair and not very gentlemanly, nor with any government that has done any work in the past with trying to root out the causes of some of these problems. It's not very fair at all. To characterize sociologists, I think he said, as somewhat namby-pamby or whatever, again,

does discredit to the work that they do with trying to root out the cause of these types of problems.

One of the things I think we had better start focusing on very clearly is that there is a two-pronged approach to this, and that this is the actual crime itself, where we want to get hard on those who use weapons in the execution of crime, and also the causes of those particular uses.

We have offered in the throne speech, and with other policies, those wonderful—putting the schools back to use and within reach of the organizations that helped get to them off the street in the first place. The previous government took that away and we're putting it back. I think that's a good response, and it's an intelligent and measured one.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Simcoe North has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I'm pleased to respond to the members from Nickel Belt, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and Brant on their responses.

Again, the throne speech covers a large area, and there are so many things to comment on, whether you agree or disagree. Obviously, that's why we're in the House as opposition and why the government supports its throne speech. I just want to say again, a lot of my time today was spent with my concerns over the future of Lake Simcoe. As a responsible MPP for a community on Lake Simcoe—a large portion of Lake Simcoe abuts my riding; I think it's somewhere around 95 kilometres from the city of Barrie limit right around to Cambridge—I've got a lot of concerns. A lot of my businesses are marinas, cottages and resorts, and our communities want to be part of the future of Lake Simcoe. We know that a lot of strong development on the lake will have a major impact on it unless all the precautions are put in place.

What I'm asking the government to do, as you're dealing with the environment, is to look very seriously at that lake in particular. Deal with it like the International Joint Commission deals with hot spots on the Great Lakes. It's just too important to the future of central Ontario to ignore. It's going to take a lot of funding, as I've mentioned earlier. It's going to take probably hundreds of millions. And it's not just a provincial responsibility; the federal government has a responsibility here as well. The Trent-Severn canal goes right through there, and we need to have the federal government involved in the safety and the quality of our lakes as well.

2030

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Sandals:** I will be sharing my time with the member for London-Fanshawe.

We've had various interpretations of what's in the speech from the throne. I think it's important to note that when we were campaigning, we actually campaigned on a four-year plan, and what we are seeing here in this year's throne speech is a confirmation of what we have done in the first two years of our plan and a reaffirmation that we are going to continue with that four-year plan. Our priorities for the remainder of our term, as they were in the first part of our term, are to improve health care, to



improve education and to focus on getting the economy going and having a strong, prosperous economy in our province.

So from my point of view, it's very good news that we are going to continue to focus on our priorities. That's very good news for my riding of Guelph-Wellington because, as we've focused on health care, we've focused on delivering service to people in the community and on making sure that health care services are available in the community. We've had some announcements in my community and my riding that have made a huge difference.

For example, in August I was able to announce the creation in Guelph of something called an assertive community treatment team. For the folks out there who aren't familiar with this term, this is a very intensive treatment team that works in the community with people with serious psychiatric problems. We, in fact, have quite a number of those people in Guelph, because we happen to have an excellent psychiatric hospital in Guelph, the Homewood. We have lots of people who have come to our community for treatment and remain there when their acute treatment is over. A lot of people who have problems, perhaps with schizophrenia or with acute depression, need to be supported in the community to make sure that they stay on medications. The assertive community treatment team can provide a psychiatrist, nurses and counsellors who deal with people in the community and make sure that they can maintain an even keel and can thrive, despite their psychiatric challenges. That is very good news for my riding.

We made another announcement—I think it was in September. We celebrated the opening of an HIV/AIDS clinic. Did you know that there was no HIV/AIDS clinic in the county of Wellington, no clinic in the county of Waterloo, no clinic in the county of Dufferin, no clinic in the county of Grey and no clinic in the county of Bruce? The clinic in Guelph is going to serve five counties. We estimate that about 400 people who are HIV-positive or suffering from AIDS in those five counties will benefit from the creation of this HIV/AIDS clinic in Guelph—the first one in five counties. That's good news for my community: that we are bringing those health services which have not existed before into our community to assist people who have some really serious challenges.

What about education? Good news on the education front as well. In the first part of our mandate, we focused on literacy and numeracy, because we understand that the absolute foundation of all education is the ability to read and the ability to master basic numeracy concepts. We have reading specialists and numeracy specialists now in every elementary school in our province. With the recent EQAO results, the provincial tests, we are seeing that we are making real strides forward. In fact, in my constituency again, good news: The two school boards in my community have grade 3 and grade 6 reading, writing and math results that are above the provincial average, and that's because of our government's focus on literacy and numeracy and the fact that it's working.

We have smaller class sizes. We said that, as a four-year program, we would roll in a program so that by the end of the four years, primary classes in the province of Ontario would be 20 children. That would be the standard class size. We are halfway there. We've had two years of government; we will continue to roll that policy in for the remaining two years.

We're now beginning to think more about secondary education because the secondary curriculum that the previous government brought in did some serious damage for those kids who need a more skills-based education. It really disenfranchised those students; worked well for university-bound students, but did serious damage. In fact, when we look at the dropout rate for kids who need skills-based education, it rose dramatically. That's not just Liberals talking; that's not just politicians talking; that's Professor Alan King from Queen's University, who has been studying this issue since the onset of the new curriculum and has identified a number of problems in the new curriculum which we are in the process of fixing.

Last year we fixed the single biggest problem that Professor King identified, which is the grade 9 applied math credit. We rewrote that credit. It's beginning to be offered in the new format. That was the single biggest obstacle to graduation.

We're doing some other things as well that are highlighted in this year's throne speech. We are going to be bringing in a new learning till 18 program because we want to make sure that students are staying and learning—not necessarily staying in conventional academic programs. We're not saying to kids, "You have to sit in this academic classroom that isn't working for you." What we are saying is that students either need to stay in high school till they complete a diploma or till they're 18, and if they're not of an academic inclination, they need to have some sort of skills training experience that will help prepare them to go out to the workplace. We can no longer have our students dropping out before they complete their diploma, and we're going to address that.

We are also going to address an issue which the school boards and the education community have been proposing for years and which, quite frankly, the previous government would do nothing about. We are going to do something about introducing an alternate high school diploma that will recognize that skills training is a legitimate form of learning, and it will give a route to high school graduation to those students who were blocked by the previous government. I am very proud that our government has adopted this proposal because, quite frankly, back in the days when I used to be an educator, it's something that I advocated for. I'm absolutely delighted that we announced in this year's throne speech that we will be moving forward with that alternate high school graduation diploma.

The good news for education doesn't end with elementary and secondary. My constituency includes a university, the University of Guelph, my alma mater, of which I am very proud. I have a lot of university students



who are my constituents. We have good news for university students because we have invested and are in the process of investing \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education—the biggest investment that we have seen in decades in post-secondary.

One of the things that we're doing is making university and community college education much more accessible for students. We have reintroduced the idea of a bursary that is not a loan but a guaranteed grant for tuition for low-income students. Low-income students will now be able to receive up to a \$6,000 non-repayable grant in their first year and up to a \$3,000 non-repayable grant in their second year. That is very good news in getting low-income students into university, because we know that tuition has become a significant disincentive. In fact, we have also expanded the loan availability for middle-income students, because tuition fees got so high under the Conservatives that tuition fees were also a disincentive for them.

So all around, great news in this year's throne speech, and I am very happy to support it and turn the floor over to my colleague.

2040

**Mr. Ramal:** It's an honour and privilege to continue the debate which my colleague just started a few minutes ago in order to continue to explain to the people of Ontario the goodness and the beauty of the throne speech, which details our agenda for the next two years, which many people from both sides of the House talked about in detail—some for and some against. Some said, "Nothing new in it." As I mentioned before, we don't want to add anything to it. What I maintain, what we have said in the past, is that we're going to implement what we promised when we got elected two years ago.

We're talking about strengthening the economic advantage we have in this province. We cannot do this without investing in education, in health care, without strengthening our communities across the province of Ontario. In terms of education, we believe that investment has to go from the beginning: We have to make the size of kindergarten classes smaller to give teachers the ability to teach better and so that the students can benefit more. We also want to make sure that all kids across the province below the age of 12 are able to read, write and do math. Also, we don't want any students to leave school before the age of 18 because we believe that by educating people, we can have enough skilled workers and talented people in order to advance us in the future, especially in a competitive world.

We all believe in technology, techniques and all this technological machinery and equipment. Life needs very skilled and very advanced, educated people. That's why our government invested a lot of money in education. We invested \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education because we believe that the future is about research, about innovation, about creativity and about technology. So without investing money in the research departments, in post-secondary education, we cannot advance, we cannot

maintain our position in the competitive world, as I mentioned at the beginning.

We didn't forget our colleges, because our colleges play a huge role in providing us with the talented and skilled workers we need, especially now in Ontario, because our investment as a government became the number one jurisdiction in the world in terms of the auto industry and auto manufacturers. We invested a lot of money in many different companies, from Ford to Toyota, to open factories in Ontario in order to create the jobs, in conjunction with colleges and universities. We're working together to create the skilled, talented and educated people to fill those positions.

This is the first part of our plan. The second part is health care. We don't want to forget health care, because health care is very important. You cannot have a strong community if that community is not healthy. When you create a healthy community, that means it has to be able to deliver the plans we want for the future. That's why we invested lots of money in health care: completing hospitals, building hospitals and infrastructure, lowering waiting times and investing more money by hiring more nurses, because nurses play a pivotal role in health care delivery. We also strengthened the ability of hospitals across the province to do more surgery, from cataract surgery to hip and knee replacement surgery, etc.

We can feel the positive improvements when we go to the hospitals, the improvements by allowing many people to practise in the field. We are trying to attract and recruit more doctors, who departed this province for many different reasons, to come back because we're creating more and better environments for them to practise and work in Ontario, deliver good service and help their people where they were educated and where they prefer to work.

All these positive measures in health care are because of our government initiatives. The Minister of Health is working very hard in every corner of Ontario to link all the health providers together, without forgetting the people who work in long-term-care facilities, because they also play a pivotal role, to connect them with the acute services, with hospital centres, to help lower the pressure in the acute services we have in the province.

Besides that, our government increased the medical spots for foreign-trained doctors from 90 to 200 and created double the residency spots in Ontario in many different cities and many colleges and universities. This is going to create more doctors and also open more spots to lower the demand on doctors and also have more doctors available to serve our communities across the province of Ontario.

When we got elected, we had almost one million Ontarians who had no family physician to go to. All these initiatives are in order to create availability of doctors for the people who need family physicians, plus the health team networks are playing a good role in many different communities. All these initiatives are to help us deliver good health care for all the people of this province.

Besides that, in the throne speech we talk about diversity. Ontario believes in diversity. We believe that



diversity is a source of our strength. We welcome people from 200 different countries who speak more than 130 languages, who practise every religion. We embrace every culture.

In order to maintain this diversity, in order to maintain our ability to connect with every customer around the globe, we need some kind of plan, a program with the federal government. That's why our fight and our struggle with the federal government to narrow the gap between what we give and what we get back in services—to give us some kind of ability and economic strength to deal with the people who choose Canada as a country, as a final destination, to help them get accredited and integrated, to help them fit into the community and get training, all the ways to fit into the community and make them able to benefit Ontario and to use their talents and their skills. They decided to come to this country to give this ability, these skills, this talent, to be part of the builders of this nation.

Those are our government's initiatives, and we'll keep working in order to narrow the gap, because narrowing the gap is very important to every Ontarian, for all of us who live in this beautiful province.

We were talking about infrastructure. I heard my colleague when he was talking about infrastructure. Our minister and our government put in a five-year plan and invested \$30 billion to renew our infrastructure across the province of Ontario. As you know, we have to invest by rebuilding the bridges, by widening the streets and the highways, by fixing the hospitals, by fixing the schools, by fixing many different infrastructures which have never been touched for years and years. That's why, as a government, we believe it is our duty to have a strong and good environment for the people of Ontario to connect them together by building good infrastructure.

So from the \$30 billion, \$5 billion went for hospital infrastructure, which my riding of London–Fanshawe, and London and Ontario in general, can benefit from. We have two hospitals. The administration of the hospitals have been trying to build for a long time. They didn't have enough funding until the ministry of infrastructure stepped in and supported the completion of both sites, London Health Sciences Centre and St. Joseph's, in order to provide Londoners and the surrounding area with good health care services.

This was our initiative. That's why all of us, when we talk about the throne speech, think positively about that speech because we talk about the details, how we can implement our promises, how we're going to work for the next two years, how we're going to implement the steps we said we're going to do for the next two years. I think the people of Ontario are happy about it, because when I visit schools, they tell me all the time that it is the best time ever that they are spending in the schools because our government created peace between the teachers and parents and the government. This never happened in the past.

2050

When you walk through the hospitals, you see the positive environment, because people know that the government listened to them, talked with them and created some kind of negotiation dialogue between them. That never happened in the past.

Also, when you go to many different municipalities, many different communities, they feel and think that they have a government working with them, talking to them and consulting with them, because we believe that by strengthening our municipalities and our communities, it strengthens our province.

**The Acting Speaker:** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Miller:** It's my pleasure to add comments to the speeches of the members from Guelph–Wellington and London–Fanshawe this evening.

I also want to go back to the member from Nickel Belt, who was speaking about the north and the reference to the north in the throne speech. I've got a copy of the throne speech here and I was looking for the section on the north, and I have to say it's pretty small. As was noted by the member from Nickel Belt, it's really re-announcements of some programs that have been around a long, long time, in many cases. If you look at the northern Ontario heritage fund, mentioned in the throne speech, that's been around since the NDP years at least.

**Ms. Martel:** Before that.

**Mr. Miller:** Before the NDP, according to the member from Nickel Belt. In fact, just a couple of years ago, under the past PC government, the NOHFC was doubled from \$30 million to \$60 million a year. That's probably the most significant change that's happened in recent years.

Other programs for the north: the GO North program, which is basically an advertising scheme, was re-announced; it had previously been introduced. The grow bonds program has again been reannounced. I think there's one line here in the throne speech to do with forestry: "The forestry sector that is so important to Ontario's economy and northern Ontario, in particular, faces enormous challenges." Yes, that's fairly obvious. In fact, the minister's council report on forest sector competitiveness pointed out in June that 12 mills were in dire need of some serious help, and the government has yet to respond to the serious concerns facing the forestry sector, including high energy prices and the highest delivered wood costs in the world. This is a critical industry for northern Ontario, and the government has got to get off its back and do something to assist that industry.

**Ms. Martel:** I want to respond to the comments that were made by the members from London–Fanshawe and Guelph–Wellington. I guess I really want to focus on the comments that were made by the member from Guelph–Wellington when she talked about education and the promises the government made during the last election with respect to what they're were going to do with education and what the government is doing now to help those young people who don't really want to be there to look for alternatives, and trying to reduce class size etc.



I thought about the promise the government made to have IBI taught in the school system so that autistic children could actually access an education. I haven't had the opportunity to raise the subject of autistic children until now, but I'm going to do so now. I was at a rally in Sarnia last Monday. There were a number of people whose children were cut off at age six and were cut off long after the Justice Kiteley decision and have not had a chance to receive treatment, and a number of kids who are sitting on a waiting list now and are not able to access services, because one of the consequences of the decision, of course, was that the government, until the decision is struck down, cannot arbitrarily cut these kids off.

I go back to the promise that was made by Dalton McGuinty to the parents of these kids, which was a promise, first of all, that the age discrimination that was practised against them by the former Conservative government was wrong and unfair and that the Liberal government was going to stop that discrimination and provide services to kids over the age of six, and secondly—we don't focus on this promise very much—a promise that this government would work with schools and professionals in schools to deliver IBI in the system so that those kids could learn in the system too, just like everybody else. Instead of implementing that promise, this government fought these families in court, and this government is going to fight these families in court again, because they're appealing the Deskin-Wynberg case, and that appeal starts on December 8.

Justice Kiteley was right: This government is violating the constitutional rights of these children. This government is violating the Education Act. I wish the government would keep this promise that it made to autistic families.

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I'm pleased to rise and give a few comments this evening on the throne speech that was delivered here some 12 days ago. We're speaking about it tonight.

It has been my observation of throne speeches in this House that the reaction after the throne speech is that everybody wants every single conceivable issue to have been mentioned by the Lieutenant Governor in giving that speech. It has not changed; people expect hundreds and hundreds of items to be included in the throne speech. But I think that we had a throne speech some 12 days ago that did capture much of what our government is about.

There are a couple of areas of our economy that were mentioned, and I did get good feedback in my riding about these two sectors. One was the automotive sector. We know that it is one of the leading forces in job creation and wealth in the province. We know that agreements have been made with Ford, GM, Toyota and Navistar from my riding of Chatham-Kent Essex that have leveraged more than \$4.5 billion worth of investment. That's a huge amount of investment for the province.

Of course, most important in my riding, along with the automotive and other sectors, is agriculture. I know the agricultural community was very pleased that they were mentioned in the throne speech. We talked about innovation and support for research and development that will help create new markets and new ways of doing business in this new world of ours for the agri-food sector.

We talked about marketing Ontario food, a new branding and marketing strategy that is important to the citizens and the people who grow the food and those who sell and market it throughout the system; and, of course, farm income, which is something that we want to work, together with our federal partners, to enhance here in Ontario.

**Mr. Murdoch:** Again, we hear from across the way how wonderful this throne speech was, and it was just mentioned that agriculture happened to be mentioned, that's all. It just got mentioned. An hour-long speech, and about rural Ontario—nothing. A few seconds at a minimum there, they happened to mention, "Oh, yes, we do have agriculture, but the feds are going to look after that for us," and that was it. So I don't know whom you've been talking to who was pleased with this, because I don't know of anyone.

It's nice that they have done something for the automotive sector, but what about the forest sector in the north? There's absolutely nothing to help them out—hardly even mentioned the north, along with rural Ontario. We forgot: You're urban-driven. The rural members: You go to sleep on us over there. Where have you been? I'm beginning to think there isn't anybody in the Liberals from rural Ontario. It certainly hasn't been driving it home. They must have put you in a little room when you caucused, because you're certainly not speaking out. We're hearing nothing from this government to help us in rural Ontario.

We get criticized for talking about the birth certificates. Jeez, you guys haven't straightened that out and, as the member said, you've got to be under eight years old to go on-line to get it. That's not going to help anything. And why wouldn't you treat everybody the same? If you can't have it within two weeks, then everybody should get their money back, but you're lucky to get it in two years, let alone two weeks.

It's been one of the worst boondoggles you've had. I understand you're trying to fix it up, and that's fine, but don't build your throne speech around that. That's terrible, to build your throne speech around birth certificates. That was it. That was the most exciting thing in it. It's unfortunate that this government has come to that.

Then you start bragging about everything you did in health, but you forgot about all the things you cut and the big tax grab you took from the hard-working people, the tax money you took from them to do all these things you're talking about.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Guelph-Wellington or the member from London-Fanshawe may answer.



**Mrs. Sandals:** I'd like to thank the members from Parry Sound–Muskoka, Nickel Belt, Chatham–Kent Essex and Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for their comments.

First of all, perhaps the comments from the member from Nickel Belt, who raised the issue of autism and treatment for kiddies with autism: Interestingly enough, I too just this past week happened to have a member from my community advocating on behalf of autistic children who actually was quite comfortable with what we're doing on the autism file. We have in fact increased the training for IBI therapists and the number of IBI therapists who are available. But we've done something more, and this gentleman who was representing the autism society locally was quite supportive of that. We have provided every school board in Ontario with an expert consultant on behaviour intervention therapies—not just IBI, but a whole range of behaviour therapies to assist teachers with knowing how to intervene with children who have challenges with behaviour, specifically with autistic children. I would say to the member from Nickel Belt that there are a number of parents of autistic kiddies who are, in fact, quite pleased with the approach that we have taken.

2100

I would challenge the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound when he says that our auto sector strategy is a purely urban strategy. I think of myself, from Guelph–Wellington, as an urban-rural member. The biggest employer in my riding is auto parts. We have a new plant in Woodstock. We have auto plants in Alliston and auto plants in Cambridge. All over southwestern Ontario we have auto parts plants. I would say that this is the engine of the Ontario economy, and we are addressing it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I'm going to begin by commenting on the comments of my colleague from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. He talked about the lack of focus on rural Ontario. I'm only going to touch on that for a second and then I'll get back to it a little later. It caused some consternation across the floor here. But the fact remains that of the three persons added to cabinet this year—the members from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Eglinton–Lawrence and Etobicoke Centre—we just took the most Toronto-centric cabinet in the history of the province and added three more ministers from the city of Toronto. If people in rural Ontario think that this government represents you or has any concerns about you, forget it.

Let me start by talking about something that overshadowed the throne speech, and that was the resignation by the Minister of Finance the day before. It was our position that the Minister of Finance should have been asked to resign, or resigned, 19 months previous to his resignation the day before the throne speech. Our reasoning was this: The RCMP had those companies that he was associated with under investigation.

The Premier says he just handed it over to the Integrity Commissioner, and the Integrity Commissioner came back and said, "He's OK." The fact is—I think people need to know these kinds of things—is that the Integrity

Commissioner does not investigate like the RCMP investigates. The Integrity Commissioner has a limited scope and a limited amount of information with which to make his rulings; it's the information that he is basically given to make a decision on. So he came back and told the Premier, "I don't have specific reasons why the minister should be asked to step down," and the Premier took that as a glowing endorsement of the Minister of Finance.

What people have to understand is that there is not a gaggle of RCMP officers at the disposal of the Integrity Commissioner to investigate what's going on and report back. The reason that the Minister of Finance was not asked to resign is simply this: the lack of leadership on the part of Dalton McGuinty—the lack of leadership to do the right thing that would have been done in the previous government. Whenever there was even a hint of a cloud surrounding or overshadowing a minister in the previous government, they did the right thing and they stepped aside. Lack of leadership on the part of the Premier on that side of it, but most important is that Dalton McGuinty was afraid; he lacked the confidence to run this province without having Greg Sorbara there to hold his hand.

After 19 months, when it became clear that that investigation was too close for comfort, finally that resignation came. I think that has to be pointed out: that it is absolutely wrong for the Premier to be hiding behind the Integrity Commissioner. He's doing it again this week with respect to the expenditures of certain ministers. He has done it before. He has done it with respect to the Minister of Transportation. He will continue to do it because he does not want to face the fact that he cannot hold up to the standards that he set.

When he was elected as Premier, in his original throne speech he talked about setting new ethical standards that would be the strongest and the most stringent ever in the history of the province of Ontario. He has failed miserably when it comes to living up to those standards that he set.

What we got in this throne speech—this one-day-too-late throne speech, if you want to call it that, because it wasn't the big news any more—is a rehashing of what they didn't do since the original throne speech in November of 2003. We got a change from those areas which they didn't want to talk about—the 50 or so promises that have already been broken. There were almost 60 re-announcements in this throne speech that was presented that day here in the Legislature.

What was the point? Was it just a photo op? Was it only an opportunity for the Premier to have some pomp and ceremony? There was nothing new in this throne speech—well, there were a couple of new things, new wrinkles, like that birth certificate fiasco I talked to you about earlier. That was something, eh? It's only good for people who are eight years of age or younger; they're the only ones who can apply on-line for a birth certificate. But this was purported to be some kind of wonderful money-back guarantee on the part of the government for the people of province of Ontario when in fact it's hol-



low. It's an empty vessel, just like this throne speech, just like this government that has run out of gas halfway through its mandate.

What did they tell us? You know what the Premier told us in the first throne speech? He told us that he wasn't going to raise our taxes. This throne speech could be called the Minus 2000. They used to have that program for homes; they called it R2000. This could be the R2, Reduce 2000, throne speech, because this government has taken \$2,000 out of the pocket of the average taxpayer since it was elected in 2003.

What do we get for that? We get a huge health tax. I'm going to read a letter from a constituent—I'm going to find that shortly, and as soon as I do, I'm going to read that, but we'll move on to something else in the meantime.

He's not going to raise your taxes, but that's exactly what he did. Even three weeks before the budget of 2004, they promised that they would not be raising taxes, and in fact, that's exactly what they did. Broken promise. That was probably the biggest one—the kind of tax, the health tax, that they placed on the pockets of the people of the province of Ontario in 2004. And people will be paying double that health tax in their taxes this year, so the whammy has just become the double whammy for the people of the province of Ontario. It wasn't enough to hit us; they had to hit us twice.

A thousand police officers—

**Mr. Murdoch:** Heard that before.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** We heard that, and my colleagues from Simcoe North and Leeds–Grenville have spoken several times with regard to the 1,000 police officers and the failure on the part of this government to hire an actual, single officer under that promise. They continue to make promises; they continue to break them. That's the only guarantee. They should have a money-back guarantee on that. A money-back guarantee: If McGuinty makes a promise and he doesn't break it within 15 days, whether he's made it on-line or live, you get your money back. That would have been the promise for this government.

2110

I want to read this letter from a constituent about the McGuinty health tax and all those wonderful increased services they talked about. We're hearing all about that now, when the minister is just beginning to—it might be years before we actually hear him starting to talk about this wait time strategy. Two years ago they promised that we'd have those wait times in a few months. Have we got them? They haven't even begun to devise a plan. They haven't got a clue what they're doing with regard to that. But we just keep hearing about it—announcement after announcement, media conference after media conference, telling us what a wonderful job they're doing.

Here's a letter from a constituent of mine, a fellow by the name of Mark Gunner:

"John:

"As discussed, I'm just wondering where our new health tax dollars have gone. Ginny"—that would be his

wife, Virginia—"and I pay an additional \$1,500 in taxes now with the new health tax and have seen no improvement in the system."

Those are his words, not mine: "no improvement."

"I suffered a perforated eardrum two years ago. Following an appointment with my GP, I was referred to a specialist. As I had ear work done several years ago, I made my own appointment with the specialist that I had seen in Ottawa. That appointment took a few months to arrive. Following my 10-minute appointment, I was told that I would have to come back for a hearing test. That was scheduled for a couple of weeks later. The hearing test confirmed that I had a hole in my right eardrum and that I was borderline for a hearing aid. The specialist that I had seen only handled cancerous growths—so he referred to me to another doctor.

"Again, it took a few months for that appointment to arrive. Dr. Murphy saw me for five minutes but could not see the hole that I know is there (I can blow air out my ear), so he scheduled me for an MRI, which surprisingly managed to happen within a month—I got in on a cancellation. I again had to see Dr. Murphy to get the results and confirm that yes, I do have a hole in my eardrum. That appointment was in February of 2005. At that time, (again, a five-minute appointment after a 2.5-hour drive to Ottawa—why can't this be done on the phone?) I was told that I was being put on the list for surgery, with a wait time of about six months.

"I called Dr. Murphy's office last week to see when this might be scheduled, as we were now past the six-month time frame. His office tells me that he only gets two surgery days per month at the Riverside hospital and that I am number 18 on the list, meaning another eight to nine months for surgery!"

So much for that improvement: \$1,500, a real bonus for the Gunners.

"John, I am self-employed and my software training business requires that I travel for most of my work. This surgery will require that I will be grounded from air travel for six weeks. In order that I can try to plan my schedule around this surgery, I have asked for a scheduled date. They cannot give me a date, and tell me that they will call me a few weeks before the surgery is to happen. That sort of scheduling will cost me up to six weeks of income due to cancellations with unhappy customers if I cannot plan around it.

"So, John, where are my health care dollars going?"

Here's a guy who is self-employed; he travels all around the country, into the States and otherwise, on contracts. He's a software troubleshooter, if you want to call it that. He's kind of an expert in that. You see, when he goes for this surgery, he has to wait six weeks before he can travel by air; he's also a pilot. They can't give him any kind of a time. Now he's up to maybe an eight- or nine-month wait from now under this government's policy: "We got your \$1,500; now you wait." So that's what you get out of the McGuinty government's health care policies and their health care tax.



I must say, I heard the member for London–Fanshawe, I believe it was, talk about how well they're getting along with municipalities. I'm going to tell you, that Ontario-municipal partnership fund that they lauded last year is a joke. Most of the municipalities in my riding are going to find themselves holding the short end of the stick before too long. Some of them may have seen some new money up front, but I'll tell you, as this deal progresses through to its conclusion, those municipalities are going to be in deep trouble as a result of the unfair policies of this government, the lack of consultation with municipalities and the fact that they don't care about rural Ontario.

There are three more ministers from Toronto. Any new ministers from rural Ontario? I didn't see any. "We are not going raise hydro rates until 2006." We can go on about what they've done with hydro rates, but that's clear. Everyone understands that, they know it, and they expect it now. They don't believe a word you say over there, so go ahead, say something.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** No, don't bother, because they won't believe you. They don't believe you.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Eighteen thousand dollars.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** They don't believe you. What about their fair electricity policy? They just thought that this was going to be the finest policy since Roman days, I suppose. You know what we're going to do? We could talk about Roman days, because it would remind me of Biblical times: It would be like the king being told by his advisers that there was a food shortage. They would go to the king, and they'd say, "Your majesty, we are short of food. There's a food shortage." It would be like the king saying, "Oh, we're short? We've got a food problem? Well, let's burn 25% of the harvest so we have less, and that would really teach the people a lesson, wouldn't it?"

That's what this government wants to do with electricity. You see, they're being told by every credible expert out there that we have a supply-demand problem. What is their solution? "Let's cut 25% of our electricity capacity." That'll really help, won't it? That's going to help the manufacturers in this province; that's going to help the lumber industry up in the north. It's going to be fantastic. General Motors' electricity bills went up \$93 million in July from the previous July—\$93 million. Say it fast; it hardly hurts. The Minister of Tourism likes to talk about small figures like \$18,000, but what about \$93 million for GM?

So where are we going to get the power? They keep talking about all of these new plants that are going to be built. Well, we're hearing some disturbing news about those plants. You know what? They're not being built. Nothing is happening. But they continue to go like lemmings over the cliff, and insist that on that timetable we will have those coal plants shut. The lights will be out, the jobs will be gone, the plants will be closed, prosperity as we understand it will be a thing of the past, only a distant memory in the province of Ontario, but this gov-

ernment will say, "We kept one promise." They're going to be so proud, because it might be the only one they keep, but it will be the one promise they shouldn't be keeping.

It was irresponsible. Even people in that caucus over there, even people from the former caucus and the Liberal Party all over the place are saying the same thing: That was a mistake. That was the wrong promise. Why are they taking us down that road? We're trying to get them steered around. There's no question that the day will come when we can move away from the use of coal as a form of electricity generation in the province of Ontario, but not in 2007, not in 2009.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** These people have no credibility on that issue. There are no credible people out there who believe you can do it. Only you people believe that.

The standard of living in the province is dependent on the prosperity of the province; the prosperity of the province is dependent on the jobs in manufacturing, and they depend on a secure supply of electricity. This government is ensuring that A won't be there: B, C, D and E will surely follow.

2120

Now I want to talk about another thing: MPAC. I won't have much time left, but the Premier says—isn't this a joke? He froze the assessments a year ago because, "We're going to fix that. We're the Liberals. We fix everything." They unfroze the assessments and the response is, "We didn't run on that." They didn't run on all of those broken promises either. They didn't run on taxing people in Ontario to death. In fact, they ran on not raising taxes at all. So now they're standing here and saying, "Well, MPAC's not our problem."

All you've got to do is go through this province and see increases in assessment of \$150,000, \$110,000, \$90,000 and so on, on properties across this province, and this government says we don't have a problem? They don't even want to look at it.

Now, as is the usual Liberal way, they're starting to backtrack a little bit because they're feeling the heat. They wait until somebody actually slaps them upside the head and wakes them up, and then they say, "Oh, God, maybe we do have a problem here. Maybe we do have a problem here." Well, you do have a problem. It's like all the other problems. You feel you can slosh your way around, hoping that somebody else will take care of it, but all of these problems are your creation. You're going to have to face them. You're going to have to start dealing with them.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Martel:** In response to the comments that were made by the member, I guess I want to focus on energy as one of the issues that he talked about, and I do so in the context of looking at the throne speech and recognizing that the government has said very little or done very little to deal with the fact that its energy policy is crippling the forestry industry in northern Ontario. This is a crisis that is going on right now that the government



has done nothing to deal with, has not engaged itself in at all.

We had another mill that shut down on Sunday in Kenora, paper machine number 9, throwing about 250 folks out of work. Paper machine number 10 at the same mill is now indefinitely out of commission until there's some resolution as to what will happen with that mill.

Let me go back to what the minister's own council on forest sector competitiveness said. It said, "Some 12 mills across northern Ontario have been identified at risk. The loss of these production facilities would reduce employment in the north by 7,500 direct jobs and 17,500 indirect and induced jobs." Further, "Southern Ontario would lose an additional 13,000 indirect jobs." That's because much of the engineering work, the information technology work and the financial services work that supports this sector comes out of southern Ontario.

The report also said that over past two years a total of 2,200 direct jobs have been lost from northern Ontario forest-dependent companies and further mill closures will have devastating effects.

The industry has said again and again and again to this government that the issue is not one of competitiveness, even though the Liberal government would like to make it so; the issue is your high electricity rates, which are choking the life out of this industry. It's far cheaper for these companies to move their operations to Manitoba and Quebec, because the electricity rate is three times lower.

So for goodness' sake, before we lose many more of our mills and the workers and the communities, would you do something about your high-priced electricity policy?

**Mr. Ramal:** I'm privileged again to have a chance to comment on the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I was listening to him carefully, and he said we have a problem. Definitely—not just one problem—we have problems, because his party, when it was in government for the last eight years, destroyed the education system, destroyed the health system, destroyed the relationship between the government and municipalities and communities across the province. That's why we're here again, to fix education, to fix health care, to fix the relationship between us and the municipalities, because we believe our government cannot grow and prosper without a strengthening between all the communities across the province of Ontario. We believe that communication is most important and vitally important in order to have a good relationship with other people in every way in Ontario.

I know he's frustrated because he sees us progressing. We're trying to fix things. We said we'd fix health care. We're working to solve the problems, to minimize the wait times. We're trying to solve the problems which you created a long time ago. That's why, for the first time ever, we are investing in green energy. We made the announcement not long ago of almost \$1 billion in Niagara stations and almost \$5 billion in the Bruce nuclear stations. We listened to many specialists and scientists from

across the globe, and they told us that what we're doing is the right thing, in the right direction. That's why we believe we're going in the right direction. That's why many factories and companies come to Ontario, because they believe we have a good education system, a good health care system, good infrastructure and a good government that listens to them and is willing to support them when they get into trouble.

That's our strategy. That's what the throne speech is all about: making the government accountable and responsible to the people of this province; a government that looks after every individual and the vulnerable people in this province. That's why we were elected, and that's why we're going to continue doing good work on behalf of everyone in this province.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** What a bunch of hooey. The education minister bragged last week about the improvement in our elementary schools, and do you know what year he started from to talk about the improvements? It was 1999. I don't remember; when was the government elected? Was it 1999? No, it wasn't. Then they talked about 2000 and the improvement went up, and in 2001 it went up further, and in 2002 and 2003. Now, who was in government for those four years when the system was turned around by the Conservative government's policies, when the education system started to become accountable to parents and children?

**Interjection:** What about the teachers?

**Mr. Sterling:** Well, the teachers performed better. The kids improved their education. The test results showed that there was a great improvement in the education system. This whole nuance by the other side that they've done something for the education system is just a nuance.

On Friday night, I was at the opening of a brand new high school in Smiths Falls, a high school which was starting construction and was promised the money in 2002 by the former government. We introduced a brand new program to replace dilapidated schools, so we gave Smiths Falls \$13 million to build a brand new high school, which has now increased to \$18 million.

We understood the needs of rural Ontario, as well as the Toronto school boards, in terms of their needs. Our government had a great record in education, and they're trying to reap the benefits of it. What a joke.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments? The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

**Interjection.**

**Mr. Murdoch:** Well, there is nobody up over there.

Again, I want to congratulate the member on his speech about the throne speech. It's just unconscionable what this government will do to take—just like the previous speaker said, all of a sudden they've solved everything about education. How many millions of taxpayers' dollars did they throw at it to try to get somewhere? We had the thing going upscale. All of a sudden, this government comes along, throws a whole lot of money at it and says, "We've solved the problem."



But to get back to what we're talking about, the throne speech, and the problems that you have with your constituent up in Renfrew, up in that area, it just goes to show that those kinds of problems are all over. Everybody is having problems. They can come in here and spend most of the throne speech talking about their great achievements in the health care system, yet they got rid of a lot of stuff in the health care system, like our—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Murdoch:** Oops, somebody's upset. They hit a fly over there.

It's just unbelievable what this Liberal government wants us to believe. They come up with a throne speech over an hour long, and there's nothing in it. Their greatest satisfaction is that people under eight years old can get birth certificates, and get their money back if they don't get them within two weeks. That is really disappointing.

We all know that the government, halfway through their term, has run out of gas, as somebody said. They have nowhere to go. They have a throne speech rehash of all their old promises, which they won't keep.

Thank you for giving me this time.

**The Acting Speaker:** The time being—excuse me. I was thinking it was just about time, but the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I could respond to so much from the member for London–Fanshawe, the member from Lanark–Carleton, the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and the member from Nickel Belt.

I really want to respond to the education side of it. The member talked about how our government—the previous

government—wrecked education and this government has saved it in just two years. Well, in my riding, this government promised to keep rural schools open, and this September, five schools in my riding did not open. This is the education minister who closes rural schools because he will not give rural Ontario the funding they so richly deserve. There's the education minister who doesn't answer letters, either to constituents or members, and closes schools. That's what you get from this government.

Many of the school bus operators in my riding are asking themselves how they can possibly continue to operate under the funding formula of this government. Oh, they send a bureaucrat to listen to them, and nothing happens. This minister does not want to face the reality of rural schools and rural transportation issues in this province; he just wants to wring his hands, do a nice photo op and do nothing about rural schools.

Five schools have closed. As we speak, there's a meeting going on in Deep River to see if they can salvage Morison school. Laurentian, Alexander Reid, Horton, Ross Mineview and Keys all closed this September as a result of this minister's neglect and indifference to the concerns of rural Ontarians, and this government's neglect and indifference to rural Ontario. So when this member stands up and talks about the previous government and compares it to the record of this government, all I can tell you is, let's do the math: Five schools failed to open this September.

**The Acting Speaker:** It now being well past 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow, Tuesday, October 26.

*The House adjourned at 2133.*



## CONTENTS

**Monday 24 October 2005**

### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

<b>Throne speech debate, government</b>	
order number 1, <i>Mr. Crozier</i>	
Ms. Martel .....	325, 327, 331, 335 339, 343, 347
Mr. Rinaldi.....	325, 332, 336
Mr. Miller .....	325, 343
Mr. Levac.....	326, 340
Mr. Hudak.....	326
Mr. Ramal.....	330, 342, 348
Mr. Tory.....	330
Mr. Dunlop .....	330, 336, 340
Mrs. Jeffrey.....	331
Mr. Oraziotti .....	333
Mr. Murdoch.....	334, 344, 348
Mrs. Van Bommel .....	335
Mr. Yakabuski .....	335, 340, 345, 349
Ms. Smith.....	339
Mrs. Sandals .....	340, 345
Mr. Hoy .....	344
Mr. Sterling.....	348
Debate deemed adjourned.....	349





No. 9A

N° 9A

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 25 October 2005

Mardi 25 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.





## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 25 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 25 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### VERNON WHITE

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm very pleased to rise in this House today to recognize Vernon White, the new chief for the Durham Regional Police Service. He succeeds Kevin McAlpine, who has retired after 33 years of distinguished service in policing. Chief White comes to Durham region after a 24-year distinguished career with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He has served as assistant commissioner of National Police Services in Ottawa. I look forward to co-hosting a town hall to welcome the new chief to Scugog on Monday, November 7.

I was pleased to join our new chief and many other distinguished guests for the Durham Regional Police Association dinner and awards banquet held October 20. I joined our new Chief White as well as retired Chief McAlpine in recognizing those honoured with police recognition awards. These included Sergeant Pat Davidson, Constables Dave Redwood, Glen Turpin, Darryl Rice, Todd Gribbons, Ryan Huxter, Leon Presner, Catherine Cornes and Rui Ferreira, as well as civilian staff member Samantha Cutajar.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Chief Vernon White to his new post and to pay tribute to those honoured at last week's recognition ceremony. These brave men and women put themselves in danger to serve and protect each of us. Let's keep that in mind as we recognize the services that police contribute to our community.

#### McMASTER UNIVERSITY

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I have frequently spoken to the leadership and innovation which is exemplified by McMaster University, but I rise today to acknowledge McMaster's celebrating the men, women and corporations who have helped Mac along the way.

We hear today of the issue of donor fatigue. Sometimes a thank you goes a long way, and McMaster recently did just that as they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the president's club, which is the equivalent of a large public thank you: a public acknowledgement of those who go above and beyond by helping us build a better McMaster to build a better community.

On Sunday, October 2, I had the pleasure of attending McMaster University's President's Club annual reception. Members joined together to commemorate this event at the Donaldson Family Marketplace in the heart of the McMaster student centre. The president's club was established in 1980 with the purpose of encouraging and recognizing extraordinary contributions from alumni, faculty, staff, parents and friends of McMaster. Its membership has now grown to 1,400. It is the generosity of these members that has helped to make McMaster University the state-of-the-art institution it is today.

The president's club is part of the proud tradition of leadership and philanthropy at McMaster University, and I congratulate its members for their commitment to one of Canada's premier universities. Earlier this year, it received the largest gift in Canadian history, of \$105 million from Michael G. DeGroote and family. More recently, we received another large gift, a \$10-million contribution from Tim Hortons founder Ron Joyce, which will go toward the construction of a brand new stadium.

Hats off to McMaster.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I rise today to share my thoughts about the terrible conditions facing the First Nation community of Kashechewan. It is unimaginable that in this country where we are privileged to have an abundant supply of fresh water, communities could live with water that is so contaminated. It is even more distressing to me that both the province and the federal government had identified problems with the drinking water systems in this community, and neither took action.

First Nation communities are continually falling through the cracks. My own experience with the provincial government is that they do not recognize these communities as municipalities. In fact, they do not recognize these communities at all.

Certainly the federal government has a responsibility to First Nations to act responsibly and to ensure the most basic of necessities are provided for its citizens. Currently over 100 First Nation communities across Canada must boil their drinking water, and over half are located in rural and remote locations in Ontario. As a country that prides itself on the aid it sends around the world, it is unconscionable that this situation could happen in our own country.

As members of provincial Parliament, it is incumbent that we be activists for the communities we represent. I call on the province to show leadership on this issue and to provide both technical support and assistance to the community of Kashechewan.

#### ARIE NERMAN

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** Today I rise to pay tribute to a gentleman in our community by the name of Arie Nerman. Arie Nerman has been a 30-year resident of the Beach and was this year honoured as the Beaches–East York Citizen of the Year.

He is known around the Beach community for his many good works, but I think of particular importance to our community is that he arrived in the Beach some 30 years ago. He was, as he describes it himself, a non-observant Jew. He lived there for about two years, only to discover that there was a synagogue two streets away from him that he wasn't even aware of. He went there and it was not functioning. He helped to rebuild it. They were having problems getting the 10 men present to have a minian and could not do it, but he has rebuilt it so that today there are 250 members of the synagogue and it has become, really, a Beach institution. They minister not only to the congregation but to the wider community. Mr. Nerman is active in the interfaith lunch program feeding the hungry. He does historical walks in our community. He is at the annual Remembrance Day service and at the 9/11 ceremony in the Beach, and he gives talks on anti-racism and anti-Semitism.

He is truly a fitting representative for the Beach. We are so very proud of the work he has done and so very proud of his being one of our neighbours and this year's recipient of the Beaches–East York Citizen of the Year.

#### PUBLIC LIBRARIES

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** The week of October 17 celebrated the libraries of this province and the great services they and the people who work in them provide to the people of Ontario.

It was also a special cause for celebration in the city of Cornwall in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh. It was during that week that the people of Cornwall celebrated the 110th anniversary of their public library. Officially born on October 7, 1895, this library has been a pillar of the Cornwall community for its entire life and will undoubtedly continue to play that role for generations to come.

1340

It has evolved from a small, quiet facility to a thriving centre of the community in the heart of the city, downtown Cornwall. Parents have introduced their children to the enriching world of literature, science and history in the hallowed halls of the library, probably unaware of the historical figures who had visited before them.

Nobel Prize winner and former Prime Minister of Canada Lester B. Pearson once visited the Cornwall

library, having been there in 1967 for the opening at one of its previous locations, as was Angus Mowat, father of our great Canadian author Farley Mowat.

The Cornwall library is truly at the heart of the community and in the heart of its citizens. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the library, in the city of Cornwall and throughout my constituency, and all those who work hard to make it what it is—the staff, the board and especially the “friends of the library” volunteers. Their contributions have made a difference in enriching the cultural heritage of the city.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** Today I rise to update members of the Legislature on the negative outcome for patients of the McGuinty Liberals' decision to shut down the independent Ontario joint replacement registry, the OJRR, and transfer it to the Canadian joint replacement registry, the CJRR. This registry collected wait times data on hip and knee arthroplasties. This decision was accompanied by a promise from the minister in this House on June 8 that “important quality data are not lost.” This data helped to reduce the need for redo surgeries, which take longer to recover from and are more invasive and costly.

On October 1 of this year, the OJRR was shut down by the McGuinty Liberals and the collection of data was supposedly transferred to the CJRR. Guess what? As of October 24, not a single surgical case had been submitted to the CJRR. This is contrary to Minister Smitherman's commitment that “We will make sure that the value of the data they collect continues to be made available to the Ontario health care system.”

If the McGuinty Liberal government has broken its promise to make this data available, how can anyone believe that they will reduce wait times? In reality, we know the opposite is true. Wait times have increased by 5.5 days this year. People continue to pay more health tax but get less in the way of quality care.

#### VICTIMS OF CRIME

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** Last week, I had the pleasure of informing recipients of the community grants program that their application had been approved. PFLAG Canada, York region, based out of my riding of Thornhill, will receive \$45,000 to organize a billboard campaign and develop a support group to raise awareness of hate crimes. Family services, York region, will receive \$50,000 to increase community awareness of domestic violence issues in York region's South Asian community.

Our government is investing \$3.1 million to provide funding for 71 projects across Ontario. By investing in community projects to improve services for victims of crime, we are working toward stronger and safer communities.

These grants were awarded to the most promising local projects that assist victims of domestic violence,



sexual assault, hate crimes, child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as underserved and unserved victims. Funds are provided through the victims' justice fund. Money for the fund is collected through a provincial victim surcharge, which is applied to all fines under the Provincial Offences Act. Federal fine surcharge revenues are also collected for this fund. Money collected through the victim fine surcharge is dedicated to providing services for victims. It is these programs that will make our communities of Thornhill and Concord in Ontario more understanding and complete communities.

Thank you, Ontario.

### HOSPICE CARE

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington):** I was pleased to attend the 25th anniversary celebration of Hospice Wellington on Friday.

Hospice Wellington has developed excellent community-based programs to provide patients and their families with support as they pass through diagnosis, end-of-life care and grieving. They were thrilled by Minister Smitherman's recent announcement that they will receive an additional \$49,600 each year, an increase of 16%, to support their community work.

But for 25 years, Hospice Wellington has had a dream of providing residential hospice care. This summer, they purchased a church to renovate for hospice beds. They were ecstatic when our government announced that in 2007, Hospice Wellington will be eligible for operating funding for their 10 new beds, right on schedule with the completion of renovations.

Our government is expanding end-of-life services that offer care, compassion and dignity to those who are in the last stages of their lives, while providing needed support to their families. This investment means there will be more choices available for people on how they can live out their remaining days.

I applaud the Premier and the Minister of Health for taking the initiative to expand Hospice Wellington, an important community-based health care service.

### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** For many years, I have been clamouring on behalf of my constituents for much-needed improvements to the highway infrastructure in my riding, so it is with some satisfaction that I note the major project this past summer that has rehabilitated Highway 11/17 between Spruce River Road and the McKenzie Inn. I'm also pleased that more improvements are on the way. In fact, today we are announcing recommended improvements between East Loon Lake Road and Pearl that will add to the safety of this stretch of the highway.

As much as this is appreciated, I would be letting my constituents down, however, if I did not renew my campaign for other pressing highway needs in my riding. Rehabilitation of the stretch between Thunder Bay and Nipigon is vital—there is no question about that—but

that does not lessen the need for a four-lane highway to bring northwestern Ontario into the 21st century. As I renew my efforts to have this project revived, I call on the minister to do the same.

On a smaller but no less important scale, a full rehabilitation of Highway 584 between Geraldton and Nakina is long overdue. This is a highway at the end of its life, and my constituents deserve a safe roadway to drive on once again.

Last but not least, I call on the ministry to approve more advance warning lights on the Thunder Bay Expressway. These lights are an inexpensive way to save lives, and I call on the minister once again to recognize their enormous value and approve their future installation sooner rather than later.

This is certainly not the first time that my constituents and my colleagues have heard me speak about—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. *Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you. When I'm up, you're down.

### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I would like to bring members' attention to our guest in the members' east gallery, the Honourable Lyn McLeod, who was the MPP for Thunder Bay-Atikokan and Fort William in the 34th through 37th Parliaments.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Also in the gallery is a great friend from Ottawa, Patrick Casey. Welcome him to the Legislature—his first visit to the Legislature.

**Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to welcome a group of brilliant grade 5 students from E. T. Crowle Public School in my riding, led by their teacher Beverly Hilton and Aldo, a former classmate of Minister David Caplan. I want to welcome them in the west gallery.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### PROVINCIAL PARKS AND CONSERVATION RESERVES ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 SUR LES PARCS PROVINCIAUX ET LES RÉSERVES DE CONSERVATION

Mr. Ramsay moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 11, An Act to enact the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, repeal the Provincial Parks Act and the Wilderness Areas Act and make complementary amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 11, Loi édictant la Loi sur les parcs provinciaux et les réserves de conservation, abrogeant la Loi sur les parcs provinciaux et la Loi sur la protection des régions sauvages et apportant des modifications complémentaires à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Minister, do you have a brief statement?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I will refer my remarks to ministerial statement time.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I have a motion for us today. That motion is that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion 9. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1351 to 1356.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Phillips, Gerry
Baird, John R.	Hardeman, Ernie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Barrett, Toby	Hoy, Pat	Racco, Mario G.
Bartolucci, Rick	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Bentley, Christopher	Klees, Frank	Ramsay, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kular, Kuldip	Rinaldi, Lou
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kwinter, Monte	Runciman, Robert W.
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Scott, Laurie
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Caplan, David	Martiniuk, Gerry	Smitherman, George
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Matthews, Deborah	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McMeekin, Ted	Tascona, Joseph N.
Delaney, Bob	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Dhillon, Vic	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Di Cocco, Caroline	Miller, Norm	Wilkinson, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	Milloy, John	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Mitchell, Carol	Witmer, Elizabeth
Duncan, Dwight	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wong, Tony C.
Dunlop, Garfield	Munro, Julia	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Parsons, Ernie	Zimmer, David
Fonseca, Peter	Peters, Steve	
Gerretsen, John	Peterson, Tim	

**The Speaker:** All those against will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Chudleigh, Ted	Marchese, Rosario	Yakabuski, John
Churley, Marilyn	Martel, Shelley	
Horwath, Andrea	Murdoch, Bill	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 73; the nays are 10.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

1400

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### PROTECTION OF RESOURCES

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I'm very pleased to rise in the House today to introduce the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act.

Last September, we launched a major review of the province's parks legislation, the first in 50 years. The last time the Provincial Parks Act was reviewed, there were only eight provincial parks. Times have certainly changed, and so has our parks system. We now have 319 provincial parks, as well as 280 conservation reserves and 10 wilderness areas. Today we have a world-class system that provides places for people to enjoy the outdoors, and more than 10 million visits are made each year to Ontario parks.

As a society, we also appreciate how important protected areas are to the health, vitality and economic prosperity of Ontario. We have a better idea of what we should be protecting and how we should be going about it.

Given all that has changed, a thorough review was long overdue. As part of the review, we outlined eight legislative proposals and carried out far-reaching consultation on those proposals. We held nine open houses across the province. We collected more than 1,500 responses to an on-line survey. Also, 141 written submissions were received from aboriginal organizations, provincial stakeholders and other interested groups and individuals. Over 1,100 letters and faxes came in from a range of interests. I want to publicly thank all of those who shared their thoughts and advice with us. The members may be interested to know that 75% of the responses supported the proposals that we put forward. We also benefited from thoughtful recommendations from the Ontario Parks board of directors.

The new Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act I'm introducing today is a response to the need for updated legislation, and, if passed, would help guide the course of our protected areas through the 21st century. I'd like to share some of the highlights with the members.

For the first time, the new act would make ecological integrity a first priority when planning and managing within parks and conservation reserves. It is important to protect these special places and to keep them healthy for future generations. Strengthening ecological integrity is a key part of the initiative and is in keeping with the goals and objectives of Ontario's biodiversity strategy. It also complements our natural spaces program, the Greenbelt



Act and the government's focus on a healthier environment for all Ontarians.

Under the legislation, we are proposing enhancements to accountability and transparency. From now on, the minister would be required to publicly report every five years on the health of our parks and protected areas. That way, people will know how we are doing on achieving our goals and objectives related to conditions in our parks and reserves, ecological representation and a range of other indicators.

The proposed legislation would legislate current planning and management policies and require management plans for all areas, with opportunities for public consultation before they are finalized.

For the first time, the proposed legislation would consolidate existing acts dealing with protected areas. Right now, parks come under the Provincial Parks Act, while conservation reserves are regulated under the Public Lands Act and wilderness areas are covered by the Wilderness Areas Act of 1959. That would all change under this new act. We would have one act for all of the components of the protected area system, and it would cover both parks and conservation reserves and recognize the key differences between them.

As recommended by the parks board, we will be reviewing the 10 wilderness areas, which cover about 900 hectares, to decide if they should become provincial parks, conservation reserves or be returned to crown land status. Once that initiative is complete, it is our intention to proclaim the repeal of the Wilderness Areas Act, and of course we will consult before making any final decisions in this regard. The old parks act did not provide a lot of guidance and planning for parks or how they should be managed, so our proposed legislation would remedy that by guiding how protected areas are both planned and managed. These requirements would be outlined in law, not just in policies or regulations.

We will also begin development of a non-legislative policy to ensure that activities on crown land adjacent to parks and conservation reserves do not affect their ecological integrity. The policy would continue to support and promote sustainable resource and community development and would be subject to consultation.

There is public support for this legislation. This act, if passed, would help strengthen the perimeter protection and ecological integrity of Ontario's provincial parks and conservation reserves. This is all part of our commitment to build a stronger, healthier and more vital Ontario.

## CRIME PREVENTION

### PRÉVENTION DE LA CRIMINALITÉ

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** I am proud to tell members of this House that today we are escalating and intensifying our efforts in our ongoing fight against gun violence in Ontario. Today we are dramatically increasing our arsenal of justice, with more

police and more prosecutors to fight gangs, to fight gang crime and to fight gun violence.

Cette augmentation du nombre de policiers et d'avocats de la Couronne responsables de la lutte contre les bandes criminalisées et les armes à feu est la plus importante qui soit dans l'histoire de notre province.

This represents the most dramatic increase in police and crown participation in the anti-guns and anti-gang task force that this province has ever seen. Today we announced the expansion of the Anti-Guns and Gangs Task Force. It is immediate and it is significant. It will mean an additional 26 experienced police officers added to the Anti-Guns and Gangs Task Force. It is immediate and will serve as a bridge as Toronto and the province bring on-line 1,000 new police officers under the leadership of Minister Kwinter and our Premier.

We will also be adding 32 additional seasoned prosecutors, who will be dedicated to working with the police on this specialized task force. These experienced crowns will prosecute existing guns and gangs cases. They will support police in the investigation of gun- and gang-related crime and the laying and prosecution of new gun and gang charges. The crown prosecutors have developed and continue to develop sentencing evidence in order to seek the most exemplary sentences within the law.

The federal government has also recently confirmed that they are in discussions with our office to expand the jurisdiction of the guns and gangs task force so that we can get that federal presence we need so that we can also include drug crimes in the jurisdiction, which is obviously a significant part of gang and gun violence.

Many of you will know that these police officers and crowns on the task force work together from day one of the investigation. The prosecutors provide early advice to the police, especially on search warrants, or on other issues arising out of an investigation. They will also, where appropriate, provide legal authorization for the police to conduct wiretaps. After charges are laid by the police, the prosecutors prepare and conduct the prosecutions. These cases can be complex and involve multiple defendants.

Joining police and crowns together to coordinate our efforts on behalf of our justice system is a concept that this government began in January 2004, a few months after taking office. It's thanks to innovative police officers and prosecutors that it happened. We know this pioneering approach works because it has achieved results. The work of the guns and gangs task force has already led to large-scale gang takedowns, which resulted in dozens of arrests, hundreds of charges, and the seizure of many firearms that were previously being used on our streets.

I want to take a moment to thank all of the prosecutors and police officers, those working on the Anti-Guns and Gangs Task Force and those working in every corner of this province, serving, protecting, preventing, and leading our community. They are the very vanguard of a civil



society, and we all in this House thank them all for the job they do.

Thanks also for the leadership of Chief Bill Blair and for the hard work and great work by our Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

1410

While I have a moment, I want to update the House on two other aspects of our comprehensive gun strategy.

Firstly, we're providing additional enhanced services to support gun crime victims and witnesses involved in these large and lengthy gun crime prosecutions. We are doing what is necessary to ensure victims have the information, assistance and support they need throughout the ordeal they are going through.

Secondly, I want to tell the members that our blitz of gun businesses is now complete. The chief firearms office has completed blitz inspections of all gun-licensed businesses in Toronto. It took place between September 19 and 23. This was done to ensure that gun storage and safekeeping standards were being met. The chief firearms officer has told me that he is now incorporating unannounced inspections of gun-licensed businesses around the province into his regular procedures; previously, those had been scheduled in advance.

We are engaging gun violence on the terrain of results. Success is measured in increments, but success is being attained. One illegal gun—just one—can exert a terrible toll in terms of human misery. Just one gun off our streets: one life saved, one family preserved; even one is worth all our efforts.

While continuing to build on enforcement initiatives, we will move forward in other ways. Premier McGuinty has already met representatives of the Coalition of African Canadian Organizations. The Premier and my cabinet colleague Minister Mary Anne Chambers have worked and will continue to work with them, in particular to find even more ways to assist at-risk youth.

I pledge to keep the House and the public updated in the days and weeks to come.

## HYDRO GENERATION

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I rise today to advise members of an important step our government has taken to recognize and encourage those electricity consumers who can generate their own power from renewable resources.

We've put in place a new regulation that ensures that all Ontarians will have access to net metering. Net metering allows a customer who generates their own power from a renewable source to connect their generation system to the electricity grid and receive a credit for the value of any excess electricity they export to it. Net metering is now available to any consumer who can generate a portion of their electricity needs through wind, water, solar or agricultural biomass. A homeowner with solar panels will benefit; a farmer who can use agricultural waste to generate electricity will benefit; and a small business with a small wind turbine on the property

will benefit. As they say, we will all benefit from the use of cleaner power.

This is another step forward, or perhaps more accurately, it is a way of encouraging many small steps forward by many Ontarians as we move ahead together in bringing a new culture of conservation to Ontario.

Net metering is an important part of our commitment to renewable energy. Our goal is to build an energy system that will serve our children and our grandchildren, an energy system that is safe, clean, reliable and affordable—energy that is sustainable into the future.

In the past, net metering was only available at the discretion of local energy distribution companies, and projects were usually limited to 50 kilowatts. Many Ontarians just did not have the opportunity to connect their own plans to generate electricity with the availability and security of power available through Ontario's electricity grid. And where net metering was possible, the permitted projects were limited in size, effectively shutting out some projects that could help make a difference. This new regulation ensures that all consumers have equal access to net metering. It requires distributors to permit net metering for eligible projects up to 500 kilowatts.

Being able to interconnect to the grid and to receive credit for excess power are real advantages for consumers, and it is high time they were available throughout this province. Consumers can save any excess production by exporting it right to the grid for credit and draw on this credit to offset charges when their system can't supply their needs. This means many more customers will be able to consider installing their own generation, secure in the knowledge that they can get full benefit from the power it provides.

While other jurisdictions in North America have allowed for net metering, I am proud this government is going further than others. For example, by allowing systems up to 500 kilowatts, our net metering program sets the stage for farmers to offset a substantial portion of their electricity purchases through the use of farm biomass. This renewable energy benefits both farmers and our province. Agricultural biomass is a renewable energy source. Maximizing renewable energy supports our strategy to replace coal-fired generation with cleaner sources of energy, and will help us to meet our target of providing 5% of electricity from renewable resources by 2007 and 10% by 2010.

Net metering is just one of a number of initiatives this government is taking to meet our renewable energy targets. We recognize that good ideas in electricity supply come in all shapes and all sizes. Our government is also moving ahead to develop a standard offer approach for smaller community and commercial projects to produce power and receive payment to cover their investments.

In fact, last August my predecessor, Minister Duncan, wrote to the Ontario Power Authority and the Ontario Energy Board, and asked that they present an approach for a standard offer for smaller generators with implementation guidelines by the end of this year. A standard



offer will create the opportunity for small community-based renewable energy projects—opportunities for businesses, rural land owners and farmers to set up renewable energy systems that can sell clean power back to the grid.

We have successfully undertaken three requests for proposals, which have attracted interest and investment from projects of all sizes, including wind, small hydro and landfill gas. New wind farms are going up near Sault Ste. Marie in the north, on the shores of Lake Huron and in central Ontario. Other wind projects are in various stages of development right around this province. Small-scale hydro projects in both eastern Ontario and the north are proceeding and our government is taking steps to encourage renewable energy projects on crown lands.

I can't stress how important conservation is in both reducing consumer energy costs and in ensuring that we have a sustainable energy system in Ontario. This government is committed to creating a culture of conservation in this province. We recognize the important role each of us has to play in Ontario, and what we can do to reduce our energy use and our energy footprint. By supporting net metering, we're taking one further step in building this culture of conservation in Ontario and ensuring a more sustainable future. My ministry will soon be distributing information to help consumers move toward net metering, and information will shortly be available on the Ministry of Energy Web site.

Net metering is an important part of our plan to transform Ontario's energy system. Our plan consists of building new generation capacity, maximizing our existing generation and transmission assets and creating a culture of conservation. Net metering provides an opportunity for individuals to contribute directly to building new generation capacity. Net metering puts generation near customers, taking full advantage of our existing distribution and transmission assets. Perhaps most importantly, net metering is a step in helping to build this conservation culture. It gives people a tool they can use to minimize their footprints, as I said, on our environment by creating some of their own energy through renewable resources like water, wind, solar and biomass.

I want to encourage members of this House and the people of Ontario to consider opportunities in their communities, in their own backyards, for renewable energy. It's good for customers, it's good for the province and it's good for our global environment. The net metering regulation I have announced today will make it easier for each and every one of us to play our part in creating this culture.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Response?

1420

#### PROTECTION OF RESOURCES

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to respond to the Minister of Natural Resources. I went down to his news conference in the media room and it reminded me of paddling around Lady Evelyn–Smoothwater park this summer, with a nice backdrop of a canoe. I spoke with Ontario Parks people, who re-

minded me that my father sat as a volunteer on the parks board for a number of years.

Parks are important to all Ontarians. May I remind this House, as the minister said, that there has been a huge increase in the number of parks. There were only eight provincial parks 50 years ago, and now we have 319 provincial parks, 280 conservation areas and 10 wilderness areas. Who was the world-famous environmentalist who brought about all of these new parks through the Ontario Living Legacy, might I ask? The answer to that question is Mike Harris. Mike Harris added eight million acres to Ontario's park system, an area the size of Lake Ontario. It's something he doesn't get much credit for, I might add.

I was pleased to see in the minister's announcement that he recognized that logging has been going on in Algonquin Park since before the park was created, and that activity will be allowed to continue in Algonquin Provincial Park. I would say that for the people in Parry Sound–Muskoka and Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, that is very important.

I hope when you consolidate the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, it means you simplify it. I'll look forward to reviewing the detail in the bill, because the devil is in the detail.

#### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** In response to the Attorney General's statement, we're becoming accustomed to grandstanding, empty rhetoric and hollow promises from this Attorney General. We know the Attorney General spent the past summer working on his tan while Toronto was enduring unprecedented gun violence. We know that over two-plus years in office, this government has promised and re-promised 1,000 new police officers, yet today there is not one new officer on the beat in this province.

We know that over a year ago the Attorney General made a big show, which is his wont, announcing \$5 million from the victims' justice fund to fight child pornography. Would you be surprised to know that not one dollar has flowed to the Toronto Police Service from that promise made over one year ago? We know that you have a \$40-million surplus in the victims' justice fund, but you don't offer to cover the expenses of Karla Homolka's victims to attend her appeal hearing. We know that you want to cut over \$300 million out of the justice ministries' budget, starting with the transfer of parole board responsibilities to a federal system with a horrendous record of protecting public safety. We know, and people who pay attention know, that the McGuinty government is quite prepared to gut the justice ministries, empty the jails, promote pre-charge diversion and dismantle the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

Your commitment to public safety is a phony front, driven by public opinion polls. Your secret plans to gut the justice ministries tell the real story. Instead of false crowing and backslapping, you should be apologizing to the people of Ontario for your real backroom plans to



dismantle programs, policies and long-standing initiatives that have had significant benefits for victims of crime and for enhanced public safety across our province.

### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** Today was net metering, volume four. This was the fourth time that this government has talked about net metering in this House since April 2004. They take an announcement and they reannounce it, and today they have reannounced it again.

What people in Ontario are worried about is whether or not they're going to have a reliable, affordable source of energy in 2007 when this government completes its ill-conceived agenda. Businesses are asking, "Can we continue to build, establish and remain here in Ontario under this government's energy policy?" Today we've heard nothing that would give them any comfort that there is going to be a positive move in that direction.

They keep talking about green power, but their goal is 5% by 2007. Five per cent is not going to deal with the gap that this government has created. The people of Ontario want to know, where is the power? We need to know that by 2007 the lights will remain on in this province, because your government's policy, as it is currently being disseminated, will ensure that the lights go out.

### CRIME PREVENTION

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** We heard some tough words from the Attorney General today, but those words have not been backed up by tough action. What did we get today? Reassignment from existing forces in the GTA; no new officers and no new resources, except for what he calls bridge funding; just a shifting of the chairs on the deck once again. Those additional 26 senior police officers added to the guns and gangs task force are being taken from somewhere else, and for those 1,000 new cops on the street, cash-strapped municipalities have to pay two thirds of the costs, which they can't afford. The reality is that the number of police officers in Ontario declined last year and there is no real plan to get them on the street.

The McGuinty government has been missing in action on this file when it comes to community investment too. We need to see some real action on preventing gun violence and keeping kids in school and off the streets. The youth unemployment rate has ballooned, rising last year to a 10-year high of 17%, and for black kids, kids of colour, it is even higher.

Toronto's youth need jobs, recreational activity and education opportunities—no real announcement on that. Toronto's communities need enforcement and protection. The McGuinty government needs a comprehensive strategy to help our neighbourhoods and our youth through a combination of tougher law enforcement and increased investment in our social infrastructure. Sadly, we're getting too little of both too late. We want to see a real action plan that's going to make the difference.

### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** To respond to the Minister of Energy: yet again, another press release; yet again, no policy.

The government believes that if they say terms like "wind energy" or "wind turbines" five or six times, this will suddenly, magically create wind turbines. They believe that if they say "net metering" five or six times, suddenly we'll have effective net metering. What I was hoping to find today was a strategy by the government wherein farmers who want to generate their own electricity would have access to the capital funding to be able to set up an operation, where somebody who believes they can generate wind energy would have access to the capital financing to be able to do just that, and where people who live in an urban area who want to put solar panels on their roof and reduce their consumption of electricity in that way would have the capital funding to be able to do that.

Merely announcing once again that the government someday, perhaps, possibly, maybe, might like to see net metering isn't going to make it happen. What we need are, first of all, the low-interest loans so that farmers can do this and so that people who live in an urban area in an apartment building can afford to do this. Was this contained in today's announcement? No. Yet another empty announcement by the McGuinty government that doesn't have an electricity plan, and because it doesn't have an electricity plan, it resorts to making these repetitive announcements that don't amount to one kilowatt of electricity when all is said and done.

I want to point out to this government that just on wind energy, for example, you have held a dozen announcements, while Quebec is building 3,000 megawatts of wind capacity. You've held repeated announcements, while small provinces like Manitoba are going to surpass Ontario in terms of wind energy. You've held repeated announcements about a culture of conservation, when someone living in Quebec can access a low-interest loan to reinsulate their home, to install high-efficiency natural gas heat, to put in triple-pane windows. Someone in Manitoba can do the same. By doing that, they can reduce their use of electricity by 35%.

What do we have in Ontario under the McGuinty government? More announcements—announcement, announcement, announcement, empty press release, empty press release, empty press release. When are we going to see an energy efficiency strategy? Five days before the next election? Is that when you're going to try to impress people? No efficiency strategy—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

1430

### VISITORS

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I know it's not a point of order, but I have in the audience today Wayne Roberts and Lori Stahlbrand, who are the parents of Anika Roberts, one of



our very own pages. She's there sitting right beside you, and we're very proud to have them in the Legislature.

### ROSA PARKS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes to recognize the passing of civil rights leader Ms. Rosa Parks.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes on the passing of civil rights leader Rosa Parks. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** I rise to ask the House to join me in marking the passing of a significant figure in the civil rights movement and the advancement of women's rights in North America, Rosa Parks.

Rosa Parks was the black woman who refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, one evening in December 1955. That act of defiance was the spark that ignited the civil rights movement. Rosa Parks showed that women can lead the way, even when faced with the most daunting obstacles. Indeed, simply by sitting down, Rosa Parks forced the nation to stand up and face the conflict between its principles and its actions.

"You died a little each time you found yourself face to face with this kind of discrimination," Rosa Parks later said of her refusal to give in.

Her arrest led to a 381-day boycott of the bus system organized by, at the time, an obscure Baptist minister named Martin Luther King Jr. For her part in the civil rights movement, Ms. Parks became known as the mother of the civil rights movement.

The days of Jim Crow and legally backed job discrimination now seem a long way off, but this is a journey that has been made in a single lifetime and a march that was launched by the determination of a single individual.

In 1957, Rosa Parks moved to Detroit, where she worked in the office of US Representative John Conyers for more than 20 years and remained active in the civil rights cause. Conyers recalls her humility, despite the enormous impact she had. She wasn't very interested in people trying to explain Rosa Parks, or teach about Rosa Parks. Instead, "She wanted them to understand the government and to understand their rights and the Constitution that people are still trying to perfect today."

Over the years, she deservedly received many awards: the US Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal. Time magazine named her one of the country's 100 most influential people in the 20th century.

I understand that when Ms. Parks passed away yesterday at the age of 92, she was at home in her apartment overlooking the Detroit River and the Ontario border.

This is fitting, because her actions had a profound influence beyond her own country. Her struggle was of truly universal significance. Her life teaches us to fight discrimination in all its forms, with courage, vision and determination.

She said at a celebration in her honour some time ago, "I am leaving this legacy to all of you ... to bring peace, justice, equality, love and a fulfillment of what our lives should be. Without vision, the people will perish, and without courage and inspiration, dreams will die—the dream of freedom and peace."

I'm pleased to share this time with our own minister for children, the Honourable Mary Anne Chambers.

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** I rise to encourage you and my colleagues to recognize that what happened in 1955 actually happened in the lifetime of many of us here. In fact, I was five years old that year, but more importantly, my sister was eight and visiting Miami with my mother, who had frequently visited Miami on business.

What was different about that particular occasion was that when my mother visited a restaurant that she often visited when she was in Miami, on that particular occasion she had my sister with her, her black daughter. On that occasion my mother was introduced to discrimination. She was refused service because my sister was with her.

Rosa Parks's legacy must serve as a constant reminder to all of us of the evil of discrimination and segregation on the basis of race or any other irrelevant characteristic. It must convince us that every single day that we live, we must be thankful to brave people like Rosa Parks, but more importantly, we must take personal responsibility for ensuring that this kind of thing never happens again.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** I'm pleased to speak on behalf of Rosa Parks. Yesterday, October 24, 2005, the world did indeed lose a very courageous and determined American woman who changed the course of history in the United States.

Rosa Parks, often referred to as the mother of the civil rights movement, was born Rosa Louise McCauley on February 14, 1913, in Alabama, to a carpenter and a school teacher who instilled in their daughter the value of self-worth, self-worth both as an African-American and as a woman. But it is unlikely that either Rosa Parks or her parents had ever imagined that one day she would be the public face of the civil rights movement in the United States.

I would just like to trace her story, because when I looked at the TV last night, you remember that she had a significant impact, but I think sometimes we forget what actually happened. On December 1, 1955, 42-year-old Rosa Parks was on her way home from her job as a seamstress for the Montgomery Fair department store. She boarded the Cleveland Avenue bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and she took a seat in the fifth row, otherwise known as the first row of the "coloured section."

Under Alabama law, when a bus was full, black passengers had to give up their seats to white passengers



and move further down to the back of the bus. However, on this particular day, Rosa Parks refused to stand and give up her seat to a white passenger. She was subsequently arrested and found guilty of disorderly conduct. Although not the first black person to refuse to give up her seat on a bus, Rosa Parks was a very well-respected member of the African-American community, having been involved with several organizations, and her refusal to give up her seat received a tremendous amount of attention from the African-American community.

The Montgomery bus incident led to the formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association, led by a young and relatively unknown pastor at the time by the name of Martin Luther King Jr. The association called for a boycott of the city-owned bus companies by all blacks, a boycott which lasted over a year and which brought Rosa Parks, Dr. King and their cause to the attention of the world.

On November 13, 1956, a Supreme Court decision struck down the Montgomery ordinance under which Mrs. Parks had been fined and declared that Alabama's state and local laws requiring segregation on buses were illegal. Federal injunctions were also served shortly after on the city and bus company officials, forcing them to follow the Supreme Court's ruling.

On December 21, 1956, Dr. King and Reverend Glen Smiley, a white minister, shared the front seat of a public bus. The civil rights movement, which was now put into full motion, would eventually lead to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It was thanks to Rosa Parks and others who supported her that citizens in America today, regardless of race, must be given equal treatment under the law.

However, even after this, Rosa Parks continued to fight for freedom and equality, and to educate others about the civil rights movement. She sponsored a summer program for teenagers called Pathways to Freedom, in which young people tour America in buses, learning about the country's history and the civil rights movement.

Although Mrs. Parks passed away yesterday at the age of 92, her legacy to future generations will continue. She will remain a constant reminder of the fight for civil rights and equality for all human beings, regardless of race and gender. She will also serve as a constant reminder of the need to educate others to ensure that freedom and equality are never, ever compromised.

1440

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** There is an old saying that some people are born to greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. Rosa Parks was not someone who sought greatness. Those who knew her knew her as a quiet person, even a shy person, but they also knew her as a determined person.

On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama—an ordinary day, with unimportant things happening—a 42-year-old seamstress sitting on a bus sparked a revolution. With only a few words, Rosa Lee Parks changed the course of history. “Are you going to stand up?” the bus driver demanded. “No,” Rosa Parks answered. “Well, by God, I’m going to have you arrested,” the driver said.

“You may do that,” she replied. By her determination, she inspired the struggle for freedom around the world. By her determination, the civil rights movement was born into full force.

Rosa Parks was a quiet person, but she was determined and she was a fighter for equality, and she was a liberator. With her passing now ends the life of one of the great figures of the 20th century. Rosa Parks's legacy has many aspects, but her most enduring was her strength and her humanity. Throughout her life, she fought for equality and preached courage and charity. We owe a great deal to her.

I expect Rosa Parks would tell us that there are still civil rights challenges today that need to be addressed. We need to recognize that racism, discrimination and prejudice continue to exist in the world, in our world. First Nation communities struggle to be treated with equality and endure systematic discrimination. Racial profiling still happens in our midst. New Democrats believe no one should be subjected to racism, racial profiling or any kind of prejudice or discrimination in Ontario and in Canada. No progress today and no sustainable development tomorrow are conceivable without the elimination of discrimination for all as a fundamental human right. We are all members of one society, we are all citizens of the world and we all bear the responsibility.

Nous devons encourager une attitude accueillante et de soutien envers nos différences, reconnaissant nos luttes ainsi que les voyages incroyables que plusieurs de nos soeurs et de nos frères ont entrepris. Nous devons également supporter l'égalité, la justice, la liberté et les droits de la personne. Nous devons tous inspirer de la grandeur.

This will not be the end of Rosa Parks. She left us a legacy. She will be remembered as one who fought against racism, and she did it with dignity. That is the way people should conduct themselves. That is what Rosa Parks wanted.

At a celebration in her honour a couple of years ago, she said, “I am leaving this legacy to all of you ... to bring peace, justice, equality, love and a fulfillment of what our lives should be. Without vision, the people will perish, and without courage and inspiration, dreams will die—the dream of freedom and peace.”

Let us celebrate the life of a truly remarkable woman. Let us recognize that the work she started still leaves much to be done.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, your Liberal government has announced that 1,000 new police officers will be hired—

*Applause.*



**Mr. Runciman:** It is certainly an announcement to be applauded, but the government has reannounced it seven times over the past 29 months, and not one officer is on the beat today. I don't hear any applause for that. Can the Premier explain why that is the case?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm pleased to be able to report that we have received a very positive response on the part of Ontario municipalities who are submitting applications for these 1,000 police officers, including, as I understand it, applications to fund 400 police officers who are presently on the job. I'm sure that my friend opposite will want to keep that in mind as we move forward.

May I say as well that I'm very pleased that to date, although we don't pretend to have all the answers when it comes to dealing with the issue of crime anywhere in the province of Ontario, I want to congratulate the Attorney General for the announcement he made earlier today and the way that he has been able to further strengthen our guns and gangs task force by adding 26 senior police officers and 32 additional crown prosecutors.

**Mr. Runciman:** They're telling us that of the 1,000, 400 are already on the job. So we're down to 600 new police officers, I guess.

Premier, your Attorney General announced 55 days ago that a gun amnesty program was being created by your government. Today, he said of that program, "Just trust us; it's coming soon." Your Attorney General also announced 55 days ago an improved witness protection program for people who come forward to shed light on a gun crime. Today, he said, "Just trust us; it's coming soon." It is the same story with the 1,000 new police officers—I guess it's now 600—that you have announced an incredible seven times, with predictable results: zero new police officers on the streets.

Premier, why should Ontarians "just trust" you when you so clearly demonstrated your commitment to fighting gun crime is no commitment at all?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Let me take this opportunity to tell you a bit more about the success being enjoyed by our guns and gangs task force, which was originally created by the Attorney General in January 2004.

The good work of the prosecutors and police involved on that task force has led to three separate major investigations and three major results: Project Impact led to 65 gang arrests and 275 charges; Project Pathfinder led to 16 gang arrests and over 100 charges; and more recently, in September of this year, Project Flicker led to 54 arrests and over 1,200 charges. What we're talking about here is the result of the funding already in place and the work already done: 135 gang arrests, 1,575 charges. I call that moving the yardstick forward. It's not everything, but we're moving in the right direction.

**Mr. Runciman:** Mr. Speaker, your Attorney General likes to claim credit for everything but the weather. The reality is that the Toronto police formed that task force in 2002.

I want to ask you about your government's sincerity in terms of its commitment to public safety. I'd call it a

phony front, a shell game, driven by political polls. You have to take a look at the considerable cuts that this government is considering: over \$300 million in cuts to the justice system; the parole board—we've already heard about that, transferring it to the federal system with a horrific record; closing jails; pre-charge diversion—can you believe it; dismantling the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. That's the sort of public safety commitment they have.

1450

I ask the Premier today to clarify for all of us—he's telling us he's so concerned about public safety—is your government, are you personally, considering these draconian cuts to the justice ministries? Clarify that, yes or no.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** No, we're not, but let me just say something. If bombast were the prerequisite to eliminating crime in Ontario, then we would have no crime on the streets of Ontario after seven years of Tory government. But the fact of the matter is, that former government did more than its fair share of sowing the seeds for the issues we've got to grapple with today.

Just to remind my friends opposite, in addition to our commitment to put 1,000 more police officers on the streets of Ontario, in addition to the expansion of the work being done by our guns and gangs task force, we have put in place 34 new judges, 50 new crown attorneys, 55 probation officers, and we continue to press the federal government for mandatory minimum sentences for all gun crimes. The fact of the matter is that we're working as hard as we can to pick up where they dropped the ball.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. It's interesting to note that at today's press conference you indicated that 26 police officers will be added to the guns and gangs task force. It is my understanding that the officers are not part of the 1,000 new police officers, but will be redirected from other police services such as York, Durham, the RCMP and possibly the OPP. Minister, you can give this House a breakdown on exactly where those 26 police officers will be coming from?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** The member will know that when we announced our 1,000 police officers program, we said that 500 of them would be used for community policing and 500 would be used for six defined areas that we're going to address, one of which is guns and gangs. What has happened is that the announcement was made by the Attorney General today that we are going to put 26 additional experienced officers into the guns and gangs task force, and we are going to provide \$500,000 in bridge financing. But when this program is fully implemented, they in fact will be in those 1,000 officers. That's how it works.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Thank you, Minister, but your Premier already mentioned that you've hired 400. That's what he



just said. Minister, will your ministry be compensating the already understaffed police services of York, Durham, Peel, Toronto, the RCMP and the OPP for the loss of manpower due to the officers being redirected to work on the guns and gangs task force? Who will be paying the salaries of these officers from the other police services who will be working on the guns and gangs task force? Just who is going to be paying the bill? That's what I'm asking you.

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I'd like to use this opportunity to explain these 400 officers. We said that we would provide, during our mandate, 1,000 net new officers. That means we would use October 23, 2003, as the benchmark. Every police service replaces officers every year. They do it for attrition, resignations, transfers, deaths and retirements. So we've said to them, "As of October 23, 2003, any net new officers that you provide we will fund to a formula of 400 for that particular sector, 60 for officers in the north and the other 540 for new officers."

What is happening is that these officers who are going to be seconded, effectively, to this task force will come out of that pool, but we're starting that immediately because these are experienced officers we want to put to work today. That's what we're doing.

**Mr. Dunlop:** That's a good answer.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** It's typical Liberal math at work.

In response to a media poll that shows residents of Toronto think that crime is the number one issue, the message from your government today is, "Just trust us. Our answer is coming soon." The problem is, all we see from you on the file is dithering and foot-dragging: no new police officers, despite seven announcements; no new police officers to fight gun crime, merely a shuffling of officers from one department to another; no action or pressing your federal cousins in Ottawa for tougher sentencing to keep violent criminals off the streets in the first place; and finally, your mandate to cut \$300 million from the justice ministries.

Minister, why have you failed to keep our communities as safe as they possibly can be?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** The Premier has already indicated to you the success we've had with our guns and gangs strategy. You should also know that these police officers we're talking about—there seems to be a perception on that side of the House that I have a warehouse full of officers and I'm just waiting to send them to different places.

We are providing funding. We said we would provide that funding during the mandate of our government, and we've made that commitment. We've increased the number for your community policing program from a maximum of \$30,000 per officer to a maximum of \$35,000 an officer. We've taken 60 officers in the north and said we're going to provide them with \$70,000 an officer, and we're going to make it retroactive for those 400 officers who have been hired and are on the street.

This is a funding program that has the co-operation of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. They helped us to design it. They are fully supportive—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** The question is for the Premier. The number of homicides in Toronto this year now stands at 64, most of them young adults. Young people who live in the neighbourhoods afflicted by this violence have told you and your government what must be done to end the violence. They point to closed community centres, abandoned after-school programs, and youth counsellors and community outreach workers fired from schools. And police, community agencies and organizations like the Canadian Tamil Youth Development Centre and Malvern Family Resource Centre agree with the youth. They don't want more half measures, they don't want more pilot projects; they want the social and community investments that are needed to deal with this violence. When is it going to happen, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It is happening. It's happening right now. For example, I've had the opportunity to meet with the East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club, I met with the Jamaican Canadian Association, I had a very good briefing from Operation Springboard and I met with the representation on the part of the African community coalition, together with Minister Chambers and a number of other ministers. I've had a very good discussion with all of these groups and representatives. We talked about some of the things we need to do together to ensure that we are tackling head-on not only crime itself but the causes of crime.

The member opposite will be very much aware of some of the programs we've funded. We look forward to continuing to work with these community groups so that we can improve the levels of support as we go forward.

**Mr. Hampton:** Many of these youth organizations and community groups have been meeting with your government for over two years. They're tired of being consulted. They want to see some action. They want to see something beyond pilot projects and piecemeal short-term funding.

For example, I met with Sharon Shelton, executive director of Tropicana, and her staff. They were very clear: Community agencies need long-term, sustainable funding, not more pilot projects. What they're getting from your government is a trickle here, a trickle there and more short-term, short funding. The Dixon Neighbourhood Youth Centre was recently forced to stop their drop-in program at the end of last summer. Why? Because you had provided only short-term funding.

Premier, when are the people who are losing their lives as a result of this violence going to see action from your government rather than pilot projects and press conferences?

1500

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I just want to draw to the attention of the member opposite that when I met with those groups, I did so out of the view of media, and it was not the subject of press conferences.

Just let me tell you about one particular initiative that we have moved ahead with, and that's this whole notion



of community use of schools. There is a letter that was sent to the Honourable Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion, from Ilene Watt, executive director of Basketball Ontario, and I want to quote from that letter, where she wrote:

"I cannot thank you and your staff enough for moving forward with the community use of schools program. It has made an incredible difference to the delivery of basketball programs by our member clubs across the province. The seven years of cutbacks in funding to the school system by the previous government actually eroded the number of children playing house league by an estimated 10,000 as gym fees continued to rise.... Our sport has a strong appeal to lower-income and new immigrant families whose national sport is basketball, and it is very important to keep this category of sport and physical activity open and accessible to all."

We don't pretend to be purveyors of magic when it comes to dealing with crime issues, but I can tell you, we are very sincere in moving ahead with the kinds of initiatives that make up for lost ground under the previous government and that meet the needs of young people as they exist today.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier would have people believe that basketball is the solution. Let me tell you, the community organizations I've met with have been very clear as well. Basketball is one piece of a bigger puzzle.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Stop the clock. I need to be able to hear the leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, they're very clear that every time you stand up and talk about basketball, it is further evidence that you do not understand the issues here. There are all kinds of youth in this city who do not play basketball. They need after-school activities as well. There are all kinds of youth who want to have an opportunity at a job. There are all kinds of youth who need to know that there's going to be an outreach worker there, that there's going to be a social worker attached to the school so that the issues that they have to address—like poverty, like homelessness, like having parents who are working three jobs to pay the rent and put food on the table—can be understood and addressed.

Premier, you said, "Choose change," to people. For all kinds of youth in this city who are seeing this violence, who are victims of this violence—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The member is essentially saying that he doesn't like the kind of change that we're bringing to Ontario, and I accept that from him, given his partisan standing and take on all of these things, but we think we're moving in the right direction when it comes to attacking both the cause of crime and crime itself.

The member opposite makes—and he knows—a very unfair accusation that somehow we're entirely committed to and focused on one particular issue, which happens to be recreating basketball programs in the province of Ontario. Obviously, we're doing much, much more than that.

In addition to community use of schools, which involves many more programs than just basketball, we're funding pre-apprenticeship projects and summer job programs. I'm looking, at some point in time, for support from the member opposite for our mandatory learning until the age of 18, which will go a long way to engaging and challenging young people who otherwise become prey to joining a gang. That may not be something that meets the standards of the member opposite, but I think it's something that Ontario—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** To the Premier: I would say, with 64 homicides, I'm not much impressed with your change.

Today, federal NDP leader Jack Layton and Paul Martin are meeting to address the spread of private health care in Canada. On the front edge of this private health care devolution is your scheme for 15 privately financed hospitals. In opposition, Premier, you said, "We believe in ... public financing" of hospitals because private financing is a "waste of money." Premier, can you tell the people of Ontario when you changed your mind and decided that our health care dollars are better spent on profits for corporations than on health care services for people?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** We're going to hear the leader of the NDP bang this iron for years to come; there is little new or innovative in that particular approach. I know that Ontarians are in fact interested in knowing what this government is doing by way of a demonstrable commitment to ensuring that hospitals are built in the province of Ontario.

We're going to get the hospitals built sooner, we're going to get them built on time and on budget, and they're going to be publicly owned, publicly controlled and publicly accountable. Five key principles inform our work in this regard: The public interest shall be paramount; value for money must be demonstrated; public ownership and control will be maintained; accountability will be evident; and the whole process will be fair, transparent and efficient. We think it's important to build new hospitals in the province of Ontario. Perhaps the member opposite has a different view.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier now says that ordinary families should settle for privately financed hospitals that put profits before people. I want to be clear: New Democrats believe that if we have \$10 for health care, then \$10 should go toward health care, not eight for health care and two for corporate profits.

I want to refer to Derek Hansen, who is a town councillor near Sault Ste. Marie, where you have a scheme to build a privately financed hospital. He says, "We are prepared to give our fair share of funding [for the hospital], but not a penny if the private sector gets involved."



Can the Premier explain why he's building privately financed hospitals that put profits first when ordinary families want public hospitals that put people first?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I might encourage my friend to visit Sault Ste. Marie, as I did when I was there to announce the construction of a new hospital in that community. I can tell you that it was overwhelmingly warmly received and welcomed. That community is delighted to learn that they are getting a new hospital. That hospital today is over 45 years old. That community needs a new hospital, and they are eager to begin construction. Again, that hospital will be publicly owned, it will be publicly controlled and it will be publicly accountable, and that's exactly what the people of the Soo are looking for.

**Mr. Hampton:** The people of Sault Ste. Marie deserve a new hospital, but they deserve a publicly financed and publicly owned hospital like you promised, Premier.

Analysis of your Brampton privately financed hospital shows that a \$500-million hospital becomes a \$675-million hospital because the private financiers want a profit of more than 20%. People aren't impressed with that, Premier. In fact, they see \$175 million of health care funding being wasted, money that could be used to train more doctors, hire more nurses or provide better care.

Premier, can you tell the people of Ontario how many more nurses we could train, how many more patients could receive good care with the \$175 million that's going into private profit pockets?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** There's nothing quite like creative math when you are bent on scaremongering in Ontario.

Here are the facts: We are committed to get the best possible value for taxpayers. We are going to compare the cost of hospitals—when we consider a new project, we compare the actual cost of construction, based on the traditional method, and that has not always been the best for us. In Thunder Bay, the projected cost was \$126 million, and it ended up being more than twice that—just so we understand how these things can sometimes come out. We compare the traditional method with this new proposal we have put before the people of Ontario, and what we're asking people to do is compare the two. In each and every instance we are guaranteeing good value for the people of Ontario, guaranteeing publicly owned, publicly controlled and publicly accountable hospitals. If the member opposite is against new hospitals in Ontario, then he should say so.

1510

## PUBLIC HEALTH

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** I have a question for the Premier. Premier, on October 6 your Minister of Health confirmed that your government contributes the majority of public health funding to municipal health departments. Will you today guarantee that not one cent of provincial funding will fund safe injection sites for crack cocaine addicts in our city?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Yes, quite easily, for two reasons: First, there is no such proposal before any municipalities in Ontario, and more to the point, any such site would require federal approval. There is no ongoing discussion in any jurisdiction in Ontario that I am aware of with an issue of that nature.

**Mr. Runciman:** I guess the Premier's communications people have spoken to the minister after his scrum this morning. In his scrum, he was far less certain than he is here this afternoon. He said he has asked for more time to review the recommendations from the Toronto health department to see what they said about safe injection sites. That's what you said at the scrum this morning.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Were you there?

**Mr. Runciman:** Well, some people were there. Minister, and this really should be to the Premier, will you now guarantee, today, that you will take any and all steps necessary to ensure that provincial money, taxpayer money, is not used as an enabler for drug users and their addictions? Will you guarantee that safe injection sites do not crop up in our cities under any circumstances?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I've already indicated in my earlier question the circumstances that would have to be prevalent before any such consideration could be made, and other levels of government would have to deal with that before it was our responsibility. I've indicated that there are, accordingly, no public health dollars involved in this.

But where the honourable member is wrong, and he could get this right quite easily: When the question was posed this morning, I said that no report from the city of Toronto suggests or recommends safe injection sites, which is true. I said in the scrum that I thought it was important that I go back and check, because I had been briefed on the report, and I felt that the reporter asking the question may have been asking it in a somewhat erroneous fashion. I believe I have been validated on that point, and the honourable member would benefit from just a little bit more help.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Premier, you are aware that the community in Kashechewan is in the midst of a water crisis. You know that children, the elderly and the frail are suffering from exposure to E. coli-infected water. Fully one half of the community's population is infected by skin diseases. I want to read from this morning's Toronto Star: "... infected with scabies, a nasty parasite, and impetigo, a bacterial skin infection characterized by blisters that may itch." You will also know that the very people who are sick are being treated with bad water and are getting sicker and sicker by the day.

You will be meeting this afternoon with the Chiefs of Ontario. They're going to ask you to help them by declar-



ing a state of emergency and evacuating children and the elderly, those who are sick, so that they can be treated and not be further exposed to bacteria-infected and E. coli-infected water.

Will you, Premier, today in this House say, "Yes, we will do what we have to do by declaring a state of emergency"?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I appreciate the member being available after question period yesterday to have a meeting with community leaders. We met and sorted out these two issues. There's an issue you've just brought up in this question in regard to the medical treatment needed by the people there who have been affected by the high chlorine levels in the water. Also, there's the issue of the ongoing water treatment plant and its upkeep and maintenance. From that meeting, we decided that the doctor would make the determination, circling back to the community overnight, and that the nurses there would make a recommendation as to the number of patients who would need medical evacuation.

Once we get those figures, we'll make that consideration this afternoon.

**Mr. Bisson:** Premier, I am quite frankly shocked that you're not gripped by the urgency of the situation. We've got kids who are sick. Some of you have been to that community; at least you've seen it in the paper. They're getting sicker and sicker by the day.

You said today in response to a scrum question that you were embarrassed about what happened in Kashechewan. Your government knew for two years, as a result of an inspection done by the Ontario Clean Water Agency, that people were at risk and all you did was send a letter to the federal government to say there was a problem. Imagine how the people of Kashechewan feel. I think they feel more than embarrassed; they feel quite ill.

I am going to ask you again: The chiefs are going to ask you today to declare a state of emergency to evacuate those children and elderly who are sick and getting sicker. Will you (inaudible) and will you declare that state of emergency, or are we going to be embarrassed by tomorrow?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** I would hope that right after question period we're going to have that information, and we're planning to have a meeting before we meet with the regional chiefs on that.

I would also like to give the member an update. I was speaking at noon hour with our Minister of the Environment, Laurel Broten, in regard to the water treatment system. Basically, she has put on standby the chief drinking water inspector of Ontario and asked him to put together an expert team from the Walkerton Clean Water Centre. That team now is on standby, and as soon as I get the OK from the chief, that team is going up into the community.

## TEACHER TRAINING

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Before becoming a member of provincial Parliament, I spent 32 years in the classroom as an educator. Standing in front of a classroom can be an intimidating experience for any teacher. How well I remember standing in front of my first class as a rookie in 1969.

My daughter Alison has recently followed my footsteps into the teaching profession, this being her first year as a teacher at Roxmore Public School in my great riding of Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh. You recently announced an induction program for all new teachers such as Alison that will provide mentoring and on-the-job training. When starting my teaching career, I didn't have the benefits of such a program, and I believe this program could be valuable for those students starting today. Minister, can you explain to Ontarians how this program will benefit and support first-year teachers?

**Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education):** It is a program that I think is notable in the sense that it's the first time ever that a second professional step is being taken, not just in Ontario but anywhere in the country. What it does, really, is send a signal, certainly to teachers but also to students and parents, that we value the commitment that comes with a brand new teacher but we also understand it is a challenging profession and needs to be supported, especially in that critical first year.

These new teachers will receive a mentor, an experienced teacher. They will receive specific professional development to address the things you can only learn on the job, like classroom management, dealing with parents effectively, doing some of the things that may not have been covered fully in their preparation in the pre-service university program.

What it means, in short, is that we will provide the most support there has ever been to beginning teachers. In previous years and in previous administrations, we lost as many as one in three in their first five years. But in addition, we will have the best-prepared teachers anywhere in the country.

**Mr. Brownell:** Teaching is a great profession, and we in this House know that it takes a certain type of person to excel as an educator. We also know that one teacher can really make a world of difference in a child's life. I experience this regularly when former students contact me here at Queen's Park to show their current successes. I believe that too many gifted and talented teachers today are leaving this profession early and I commend you for initiating a program to assist teachers who are just beginning to realize their potential.

Under former governments, Ontario teachers wrote qualifying tests to become prepared for the teaching world. How does this program improve upon the former Ontario teacher qualification testing program?

**Hon. Mr. Kennedy:** We thought it was important to have quality assurance about teachers when they're actually teaching. What there was before was an expensive



\$9-million test applied by an American company, hired by the previous government, that gave the test before any classroom teaching started and right after the students had finished their exams and their coursework.

What will happen instead is that every new teacher will be evaluated by a principal two times during their year and they will receive supportive development in between. If they don't succeed in that, they will continue to get development. They will then reach the formal teacher appraisal program. I think what this does is create the right kind of relationship where principals are both evaluating but also supporting the development of new teachers. Unlike some previous administrations, we believe it is our job in this Legislature to support the quality of teaching, to make sure that it works, to make sure that every student in this province has their potential unlocked by a teacher who will help them to reach their potential as quickly as possible.

1520

### TOBACCO INDUSTRY

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** Will the Premier inform the House what his government is prepared to do to help the 550 workers at Imperial Tobacco in Guelph who are losing their jobs next year because of his government's policy?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** Imperial Tobacco made a decision, obviously, responding to market conditions.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Nice suit.

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** You should try wearing one one day. This place might be more respectable.

The fact is that Imperial Tobacco is responding to market conditions they've cited. Their market has declined and they've cited those reasons. But I have to tell you that there's a lot of great news in the economy right now in terms of new job creation. Let me just repeat what has happened in Woodstock with Toyota locating there. That's going to have a tremendous impact on that community, which is affected by tobacco losses in terms of the market conditions. The new jobs that are coming to Woodstock and that entire region of southwestern Ontario, the spin-offs in terms of parts jobs, puts a tremendous boost to the economy and a great vote of confidence in the economy of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Supplementary question.

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** This has to go back to the Premier. Clearly the Guelph area is another casualty of McGuinty's war on tobacco. As with tobacco farming, your government is waving goodbye to jobs and to tax dollars. You jack up taxes, you jack up illegal consumption, and you force legal producers and legal manufacturers to leave the country. Community businesses go under. I've lost five new car

dealerships now in my riding. Premier, this is serious. Tobacco companies need a non-partisan working relationship with your government to salvage Canada's farming and industrial community. Given the recent bad news, and I regret they have made light of this bad news, will the Premier inform the House what he is going to do to provide a dignified exit from tobacco for farmers, and support their communities?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Labour will need to come to order.

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** The Minister of Agriculture would like to respond to that.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I'm really happy to have the opportunity to talk in this House about what our government has done to support the tobacco industry, as they recognize the importance to transition to new crops, and also the importance of investing in those communities. We have established the tobacco transition fund. We have asked the Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board to administer \$35 million for tobacco farmers in Ontario. Another \$15 million has been set aside and delivered to the Canada futures development program to support communities where the tobacco industry has been significant, to assist them in diversifying some of the initiatives in those areas where the impact of announcements such as—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

### JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** My question is for the Attorney General. New Democrats have repeatedly called on you to do something about Ontario's critical shortage of justices of the peace. Hamilton's provincial offences courts are in chaos over your failure to address the JP shortage across Ontario. Had you fixed the problem like you had promised, Hamilton would have two courts sitting three times a day, five days a week, handling provincial offences, but because of your inaction, only one courtroom is being used and it operates only one day a month. Attorney General, what is your plan to properly staff provincial offences courts in Hamilton and elsewhere so they can operate at full strength?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** I welcome the question because the time for modernizing the justice of the peace bench is upon us now. This is a bench that has not had any significant changes to the way in which people are appointed, to the way in which the complement is in fact addressed, or issues dealing with transparency and independence. Nothing has changed for year after year after year under that government or that government. So what this government has been doing is appointing justices of the peace in a different way.

They are interviewed. A number of names are submitted to the Justices of the Peace Review Council and, just as with the Ontario Court of Justice, they recommend



a set of appointments from which they are appointed to the justice of the peace bench. It means that there is more independence. It means that there is more transparency and, most importantly, it means—and I'm sure the members of the third party would be supportive of this—that we are modernizing the justice of the peace bench so that we are giving our justice system and the people who appear before it—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Ms. Horwath:** Unfortunately, the efforts you're making are cold comfort to the people of Hamilton. In fact, ministry officials in my city say they are worried that important charges are being thrown out: everything from drunk driving and dangerous workplaces to derelict landlords. The landlord of 355 Melvin Avenue in Hamilton East is finally facing charges on major property violations, but your failure to provide enough justices of the peace means that this case won't even be heard until February 2007, at the earliest. Your non-response is that the Dalton McGuinty don't-pay-a-cent-event for law-breakers is good enough, and that's not good enough for me.

Can you please tell me again, why have you allowed Hamilton's court system to become so dysfunctional and what is your plan to fix this very serious problem?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** As I said, the opportunity to modernize the bench is upon us. A bill is going to be introduced on this matter very, very soon. I know that the third party is going to want to immediately do all they can to ensure that we can achieve the expedited debate, that we can achieve appropriate attention to this, so that we can get this bill, if it receives the support of the Legislature, passed as soon as possible, so that we can help that court in Hamilton, so that we can help that court in every corner of the province and so that we can have a justice of the peace system that we can all be proud of. Ladies and gentlemen, it's finally happening.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward–Hastings):** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I can't tell you how pleased and proud I was with yesterday's announcement of Ontario's first-ever wait times Web site. We all know that one of the challenges in our health care system has long been wait times for the kind of procedures people need to restore their eyesight, allow them to be mobile and independent, or that can literally change their lives.

It's clear that long wait times have been the shameful legacy left to Ontario by previous governments. Poor decisions and a lack of fortitude to tackle a challenging problem on behalf of Ontarians left a health care system that didn't work for patients. This was unfortunate, as people like my constituents paid the price as a result. Now we're making real progress.

I went on to [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca) yesterday as soon as it was launched, and I felt empowered, not just for

myself but for my constituents. Can you tell me more about this Web site and how it fits in with our plans and benefits for patients?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I think the well-known adage that information is power has come to life in Ontario as relates to wait times. Yesterday, as a result of the actions of our government, but more particularly the actions of our government made possible by the extraordinary leadership of the health care system, Ontarians were given access to a tremendous amount of new information.

Yesterday, Ontarians were also forced to face down the cynicism of those opposite who said derisively, "Who would bother to log on to a Web site?" In the first 25 hours of the operation of this Web site, 22,480 Ontarians reached in and asked for information about what's going on. What I am especially proud to report is that at least two of those 22,000 people were seniors who found the capacity to navigate this tool that, according to my critic from the PC Party—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. 1530

**Mr. Parsons:** I'm sorry I went overtime, but if I speak any faster, they won't understand over there.

Minister, this is what my constituents and I have been waiting for for far too long. Our government has a plan, the fortitude to deliver results on behalf of patients in this province. I have always felt strongly that people are entitled to their health care information. As I said earlier, I went on to the Web site with excitement yesterday to learn more about the wait times in my own local health integration network. I saw that wait times for knee replacements in the southeast LHIN vary substantially, with Quinte Healthcare having the shortest wait times. This means that patients on a wait list in Kingston can consult with their doctor to explore the possibility of having the operation done at Quinte Healthcare. At the same time, I noted that Kingston has been a leader in terms of wait times for MRIs. This looks like the beginning of a system that will work for patients. Is this the kind of information we expect will help patients across the province?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I think the evidence is in that the only people who like this Web site are the people themselves. The honourable member understands by the nature of his question that as local health—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Oh, give that guy a question, please—that as local health integration networks come to life, we have the capacity for the health care system in the same area to work together and to perform more as a system, not each hospital operating alone without any regard for what's going on in other hospitals, but rather, as an example, surgical programs coming together and seeking to find the ways they can better work together. This is the evidence that is developing all across the province of Ontario, and in the southeast LHIN as in each of the other 14, we have a new capacity for system performance and new, powerful tools for Ontarians.



## PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** A question to the Minister of Finance: Yesterday I asked you a very basic question about your plans for the provincial education property tax rate and you seemed unaware that the Minister of Finance sets that. I think you've had a chance for your briefing, so I'll ask you again. Cities and counties across Ontario are seeing substantial increases in their MPAC assessments. Homeowners are also coping with your higher energy costs, your higher taxes, higher gas prices, and now, Dalton McGuinty health care user fees. Would you please tell us that you'll prevent this education property tax from being taken from these hard-working taxpayers? Will you commit today to lowering the provincial education property tax rate?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** I would remind the member opposite that in fact this government in 2005 set the education tax as revenue-neutral. It responded to the assessment for the 2005 time period. As you know, the property tax assessments are going out. People are finding out. By example, the province-wide uniform residential tax rate for 2005 was set at 0.296%, which was reduced from the rate your government set of 0.335%, to accommodate the changes in property tax assessments.

**Mr. Hudak:** The minister continues to avoid my very simple question. Education property taxes are set to increase substantially, hundreds of millions of dollars across Ontario, unless you act. Communities like Hamilton are seeing a 16% increase in their assessments; Prince Edward county, 21%; Grey and Bruce county, in the 20s; eastern Ontario, in the 30s. Why don't you stand on your feet today and commit that those property tax bills are not going to go up by that rate, that you will, in your capacity as finance minister, commit today to lowering the provincial property tax rate for education?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Perhaps the member didn't understand what I said. The policy of this government has been to set the education tax rate as revenue-neutral.

Now, let's talk about MPAC and the current system of reassessments that were developed under your government. I was very interested to read the comments of John Yakabuski who, asked if the former government under Premier Mike Harris bungled the property tax evaluation system, said, "Apparently so."

What else have we reviewed about the property tax assessment? I'd like to just spend a moment reminding the member, since he has given me the opportunity to re-explain our policy, what your policy was. You downloaded public health. You downloaded child care. You downloaded drinking water testing. You downloaded social housing. You downloaded roads and bridges. You downloaded public transit. If property taxes have gone up in this province, sir, I respectfully submit that it's your fault—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Stop the clock. The member for Nickel Belt is waiting to ask her question.

Member for Nickel Belt.

## LEGAL AID

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Thank you, Speaker.

I have a question for the Attorney General. Almost four years ago, Norrah Whitney filed a complaint of discrimination at the Ontario Human Rights Commission on behalf of her autistic son, Lucas. She received a legal aid certificate to pay for a lawyer to handle the case. Legal aid has now cancelled the certificate, just as the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario begins to hear the case. Both her former counsel and Ms. Whitney have asked legal aid for reconsideration. There has been no reply.

Minister, will you intervene at legal aid to ensure that Lucas will have the representation he needs before the tribunal?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** I know the member held a press conference on the subject this morning. I was not able to see it. If the member has some particulars and specifics that she wishes to send over to me, I'll undertake to do whatever is appropriate for me to do.

**Ms. Martel:** I will send the specifics to you.

I want to make a couple of points. Despite writing to legal aid over a month ago, neither counsel for Ms. Whitney nor Ms. Whitney herself have received a reply—this at a time when a certificate has been in place for almost three years now. Norrah Whitney herself cannot afford to pay for a lawyer to represent Lucas. She is not a lawyer, so she does not want to take on that responsibility herself.

This very important case could have very significant implications for hundreds of autistic children in this province. So I say to the minister again, because he will have to do this, is he prepared to intervene at legal aid to ensure that Lucas will have a lawyer during these proceedings before the tribunal?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** This particular matter before the human rights tribunal does have commission counsel. Commission counsel is there and will be bringing forth issues, facts and representing the public interest.

In addition to that, there is another lawyer who does represent the vast majority of people before the commission, who is receiving funding from Legal Aid Ontario. I believe that—

**Ms. Martel:** No.

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** Yes. I know that the individual the member has raised today is not using that counsel right now. That's why I've asked the member to provide me with the particulars. And if there is something appropriate that I can do, I will do it.



## ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** My question today is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and it's on the issue of Ontario Municipal Board reform. Minister, you will know that yesterday the GTA mayors and many members of GTA councils visited Queen's Park and held a press conference. They were here to encourage planning and, more specifically, Ontario Municipal Board reforms. Since our election, our government has taken many steps to improve the planning system in Ontario. In fact, the mayor of my own community of Oakville, Mayor Ann Mulvale, said yesterday, "The Liberal government has introduced a number of significant reforms to the planning process during the past two years. My constituents are very interested in the planning process and in contributing to what the community will look like in years to come."

Minister, what steps has our government taken toward reforming planning systems and the Ontario Municipal Board?

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Let me first of all thank the member for his question, because I know that he has always had a huge interest in good planning, not only for Oakville but for Ontario. As a matter of fact, I note that as a former member of the GTA task force on OMB reform, he's got first-hand experience as to what the community wants with respect to planning and OMB reform.

1540

He will also know that our first act in the Legislature, as a matter of fact, was to pass the Strong Communities Planning Amendment Act, which basically gave more powers to municipalities. It opened up the planning process and it also allowed for more and longer public scrutiny by the general public and councils.

I know he's also interested in cutting the cost of OMB hearings. We are involved in consultations. We will be coming forward with some legislative changes within the very near future that I think both he and the individuals who spoke here yesterday can be proud of.

**Mr. Flynn:** That's a very good answer.

I chaired the planning reform consultation session hosted by the government in my community of Oakville last year—a very well-attended meeting. It was a great opportunity to listen to the views of my constituents in Oakville. Many individuals raised the point that the previous government did absolutely nothing about reforming the Ontario Municipal Board. I am thrilled that we have acted and are doing something about the OMB.

The current GTA task force on OMB reform includes Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion, Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale and Ajax Mayor Steve Parish. They applaud the government's initiative in enacting changes to the planning process.

I'm aware that more reforms are required. Please explain to my constituents in Oakville what the next steps on OMB reform are and what steps will be involved in that process.

**Hon. Mr. Gerretsen:** I might just remind the member as well that the Premier made a commitment to the AMO conference delegates in August this year that there will be OMB reform and there will be a new era of municipal planning in Ontario. We all know that planning to deal with gridlock and sprawl has been lacking over the last eight years, especially in the GTA, so we're going to deal with that.

We want to give municipalities the best tools possible to deal with planning issues. We want to make sure that the provincial policy statement is adhered to, not only by municipalities but also by the Ontario Municipal Board, should that happen.

I would just ask the member to stay tuned, because OMB reform is on its way and it will be here shortly.

## CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I want to get a clarification from the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services on the 26 police officers to the guns and gangs task force. I'm asking you once again, is there any way you could indicate to this House where those 26 police officers will come from? You didn't answer it the first time, and I'm asking you if you can indicate what municipal police service—or the OPP or the RCMP—they will come from. I'd appreciate an answer to that.

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** This morning, during our press conference, Bill Blair, the Chief of Police of Toronto, was asked that question. He said that because this gangs and guns issue is not confined to the geographic definition of Toronto—they're not going to stop at Steeles Avenue and not go across the street—he is co-operating with the bordering police services of York, Durham and Peel, and saying, "We will all co-operate. You will provide officers to this task force." The exact number, from whatever service, is to be determined, but the Attorney General has announced that we will provide \$500,000 in bridge funding to finance that complement of 26. The exact makeup of it and where they are going to get those officers is really the decision of the task force itself.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Thanks very much, Minister. I understand now what you were trying to say, except that I was expecting the specifics, whether it was Halton or Peel or York or whatever it may be.

One other question: Is it true that, as you review the uploading of the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board to the National Parole Board, you, along with the Attorney General, are looking for ways to reduce the spending of the two ministries—

**The Speaker:** Member, that supplementary is in no way related to the original question.

**Mr. Dunlop:** It's to do with financing, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** It is a considerable stretch, but I'm sure the minister may, under the circumstance, want to answer.



**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** First of all, there were two real issues in that supplementary. One was about the parole and early release program, and the other one was the constraints that we're under in all levels of government. I can tell you this: We have a results-based plan that is going to get the finances of this province into a place where—you left it as a mess, and we're sorting that out. In order to get there, we've got to take a look at how we spend our money, to make sure that we are spending it efficiently and effectively. We are doing that and we're doing that in all of the ministries across the whole of government. We are making sure that we fulfill our campaign promise to provide proper funding for education, proper funding for health care and proper funding for economic development and also making sure that all of the other ministries deliver the services to the people of Ontario in a fiscally responsible way.

### TENANT PROTECTION

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. More than two years ago, Dalton McGuinty said that within one year of the election of a Liberal government, there would be a new Tenant Protection Act. One year has gone by, two years have gone by, we're into the fall session of the third year, and there's nothing on the agenda paper. When are you going to bring forward the new Tenant Protection Act that actually protects tenants?

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** As the member well knows, it's a very complicated issue. We've been doing an awful lot of consultation on it. We had a major consultation that took place last year.

Let's just talk about some of the programs that we have brought in with respect to tenants and with respect to renters in the province. We brought in the rent bank, which helps out tenants who are in an emergency situation with some help that they need so that they can stay in their places. We brought in the Toronto pilot project in which 400 units were made available for low-income families at a much reduced rent rate. We brought in rent guidelines at historically low levels; as a matter of fact, they were 1.5% for 2005 and 2.1% for 2006.

We are coordinating, together with the federal government, a national housing framework. There's much work to be done, but an awful lot has already been done by this government in order to help the renters and the low-income people in the province of Ontario.

### PETITIONS

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

"Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

"Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

"Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of" Ontario "patients."

This petition has my signature of support as well.

#### MACULAR DEGENERATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I am pleased to lend assistance to my seatmate from Niagara Falls with this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet) and there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry) that are not covered.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment cost for this disease is astronomical for most constituents and adds a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program."

This is a laudable objective. I will sign it and ask page Jasmine to carry it for me.

1550

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have here a petition signed by a great number of my constituents:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and



"Whereas quality supports are dependent on the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I affix my signature to this, as I agree with it, and I give it to my friend Charlie, who will bring it up there for you.

### IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Lots of immigrants who come to this ... country with degrees in agriculture are forced to drive taxis in order to survive with their families. Some of the reasons" for this condition are: "immigrants have no contacts with rural Ontario, they socialize in communities which have no ties in rural Ontario, labour jobs in rural communities do not fit into the aspirations of agriculture-educated immigrants, government policies concentrate immigrants in urban areas, and finally, there is a huge gap in service for promoting, advocating and bridging the agricultural skills and degrees earned in home countries by immigrant populations.

"If the Legislative Assembly helps us to set a training farm centre under 'Community Economic Development for Immigrant Women' incorporation number 1618157, the organization will follow strategies such as hands-on training on Ontario soil, presentations, workshops, farm tours, liaison with local farmers' associations and agricultural educational institutions, advocacy in the provincial Legislature and municipal councils, and exploration trips by immigrant families to rural Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We want the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recommend the Ministry of Agriculture to help in setting up a training farm centre in a rural area, which should be most suitable for this purpose."

I am in agreement with this petition, and I send it to you via page Austin.

### LESLIE M. FROST CENTRE

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** "Recommendations for the Frost Centre.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government announced the closure of the Leslie M. Frost Natural Resources Centre in July 2004 with no public consultation; and

"Whereas public outrage over the closure of the Frost Centre caused the government to appoint a working committee of local residents to examine options for the future of the property; and

"Whereas the working committee has completed their consultations and has prepared recommendations for the provincial government that include a procedure to follow during the request for proposals process; and

"Whereas the Frost Centre has been an important educational resource for the community, and continued use of the facility for educational purposes has widespread support;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should retain public ownership of the Frost Centre lands and follow the recommendations of the working committee regarding the request for proposals process."

It's signed by hundreds of people from my riding, and we're looking forward to the request for proposals.

### MACULAR DEGENERATION

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I've got a petition from the riding of Niagara Falls.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet) there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry) that are not covered.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment cost for this disease is astronomical for most constituents and adds a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program."

### HIGHWAY 35

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** Highway 35 four-laning:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas modern highways are economic lifelines to communities across Ontario and crucial to the growth of Ontario's economy; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has been planning the expansion of Highway 35, and that expansion has been put on hold by the McGuinty government; and

"Whereas Highway 35 provides an important economic link in the overall transportation system—carrying

commuter, commercial and high tourist volumes to and from the Kawartha Lakes area and Haliburton; and

"Whereas the final round of public consultation has just been rescheduled;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government move swiftly to complete the four-laning of Highway 35 after the completion of the public consultation process."

I affix my name. It's signed by several members of my riding.

### SKILLS TRAINING

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition given to me by a community activist in my riding, Mr. Sonny Sansone, a busy and hard-working man. He continues to give me petitions, and I have one again today.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government has committed to a new multi-year increase of \$6.2 billion in colleges and universities;

"Whereas 178,000 new jobs have been created since the McGuinty government took office;

"Whereas the McGuinty government introduced the apprenticeship tax credit in order to encourage employers to participate in developing a highly skilled workforce; and

"Whereas the McGuinty government has invested \$12.5 million this year to assisting internationally trained individuals gain recognition in order to join the workforce;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the McGuinty government's commitment to ensure that Ontario has the best skilled workforce and the strongest economy."

I agree with this petition, and I affix my signature to it today.

### VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** "Support Volunteer Firefighters.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas many volunteer fire departments in Ontario are strengthened by the service of double-hatter firefighters who work as professional, full-time firefighters and also serve as volunteer firefighters on their free time and in their home communities; and

"Whereas the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association has declared their intent to 'phase out' these double-hatter firefighters; and

"Whereas double-hatter firefighters are being threatened by the union leadership and forced to resign as volunteer firefighters or face losing their full-time jobs and this is weakening volunteer fire departments in Ontario; and

"Whereas Waterloo-Wellington MPP Ted Arnott has introduced Bill 52, the Volunteer Firefighters Employment Protection Act, that would uphold the right to volunteer and solve this problem concerning public safety in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the provincial government express public support for MPP Ted Arnott's Bill 52 and willingness to pass it into law or introduce similar legislation that protects the right of firefighters to volunteer in their home communities on their own free time."

It's signed by hundreds of people from my riding, and I affix my signature.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to standing order 30(b), it being 4 o'clock, I'm now required to call orders of the day.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### BUDGET MEASURES ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005

#### SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES

Mr. Duncan moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 197, An Act to implement Budget measures /  
Projet de loi 197, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines  
mesures budgétaires.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** It gives me great pleasure to rise today to speak about the Budget Measures Act, 2005, and I will be splitting my time with my parliamentary assistant, Wayne Arthurs.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** He deserves a great round of applause; he's a great member.

This is my first formal opportunity, apart from question period, of course, to address the House as finance minister. I'd like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and through you all of my colleagues in this place, for allowing me the opportunity.

When we introduced our first budget in May 2004, we laid out for debate and consideration our government's four-year plan for the province. It's a prudent plan. It balances the budget and practises restraint. It's a plan that delivers the results Ontarians want in health and education. It's a plan that delivers transparency and accountability. It's the right plan for Ontario.

**1600**

I'm proud to announce that we've made significant progress on our plan. Here are just a few examples. Class sizes in the early grades are smaller, there are more teachers, and test scores are higher. New family health teams are now starting up right across the province, and



our auto strategy has leveraged \$4 billion of new investment in this province and the jobs that go with that. I see the member for Oakville here, who worked so hard on that project for his community, for the Ford Motor Co. As that company restructures and deals with its challenges, we know in Ontario, because of his efforts and the efforts of my colleague the Minister of Economic Development, that this province will benefit from more investment, better jobs and higher-paying jobs.

All the while, while all these budget measures have gone on, we have seen 193,000 new jobs created in Ontario, all of this time cutting a deficit we inherited from the previous government by almost \$4 billion—a \$4-billion cut in that deficit. Clearly, our plan is sound and our plan is working.

In our second budget, we've outlined the next phase of the plan, to strengthen our province by investing in our people. In speaking to this bill today, I'd like to talk about some of our achievements to date and show how the budget bill builds on those achievements. After my remarks, as I said, my parliamentary assistant will provide some additional detail about the bill itself and some of the measures proposed in the bill to further the plan laid out in the budget.

When our government took office a little more than two years ago, we inherited a multi-billion-dollar deficit from the Harris-Eves government. Between 2001 and 2003-04, program spending increased by 21% while taxation revenue declined by almost 1%. By any stretch of the imagination, this was a practice that could not continue. The deficit for 2004-05 is \$1.6 billion, down significantly from our own budget prediction earlier this year and, as I said a moment ago, almost \$4 billion less than what we inherited from our predecessors. Much of the credit for this success is due to my predecessor, the Honourable Greg Sorbara. I, along with my colleagues in our caucus, commend him for the job he's done and for his commitment to the people of this great province.

The economy has also performed better than expected. Our revenues, particularly corporate tax revenues, are higher. Our interest costs, through better debt management and rates, are lower. We did not use our reserve, and we imposed discipline on the management of resources across the government. We will have a balanced budget at the latest in 2008-09. It may even be possible to get there in 2007-08, if we don't need our reserve. But we will only get there if we continue to make discipline our watchword, and that is what we are doing with the Budget Measures Act, 2005.

We are introducing measures that, if passed, will amend the Community Small Business Investment Funds Act, the Financial Administration Act and the Ministry of Revenue Act. These amendments that are being proposed will continue our disciplined approach to governing and will allow for the continued growth and prosperity of our province.

To govern is to choose. We have chosen in this year's budget to invest in the priorities of the people of Ontario and to do so without introducing any new taxes or tax increases.

Our greatest Premiers have always made public education their highest priority. They've understood the link between a quality education and a long-term job which, in turn, supports a stronger economy. That link is stronger than it's ever been, because the brains and know-how of a skilled workforce are the economic edge of the 21st century. That's why we've announced Reaching Higher, the McGuinty government plan for post-secondary education. This \$6.2-billion, multi-year commitment is the single largest investment in higher education in 40 years.

The Reaching Higher plan has three goals: first, access to post-secondary education; second, quality post-secondary education; and third, accountability of the post-secondary system. In return for our investment, we will demand that institutions provide more access, more student assistance, higher quality, and more transparency and accountability.

In the spring budget bill we are debating here today, we are continuing our tradition of being open and transparent. This bill contains measures that will extend the spirit of our freedom of information legislation to include colleges and universities. We are introducing amendments that, if passed, will amend the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to accommodate the inclusion of universities and colleges. This is a historic step and one this government is very proud of.

In health care, we're focusing on patients and sustaining medicare. Our plan includes a \$33-billion investment in health care this year. It means more doctors and nurses, shorter wait times, and a plan that keeps Ontarians healthier. Starting in 2005-06, we will, for the first time, begin to provide multi-year, hospital-by-hospital funding, which will allow better planning and smarter spending opportunities.

We are taking great strides toward improving Ontario's health care system. We have increased the number of training spots for international medical graduates and the number of residency positions in our medical schools. In September 2005, the first class undertook its studies at the new medical school in northern Ontario. We have provided funding for more than 3,000 new nursing positions in hospitals, long-term-care facilities, home care and community agencies.

Sixty-nine new family health teams are taking shape, teams that will provide family care for more than one million Ontarians. Over the next year, the province will announce 80 more such teams. We're providing thousands more cancer, cataract, and hip and knee replacement surgeries. In addition, we are promoting healthier lifestyles and increasing the province's share of public health unit funding from 50% to 75% by January 2007.

Economic growth is imperative to achieving Ontario's full potential. I want to turn my attention now to the economic part of our plan.

In addition to Reaching Higher, it also includes a five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan that will include highway repairs and expansion; improvements to schools, colleges and universities; expansion and im-



provements to hospitals; major investments in public transit; low-cost loans through the Ontario Strategic Infrastructure Financing Authority to help Ontario communities proceed with some 1,000 local roads, bridges, water projects and other priorities; and also looking at ways to encourage Ontario's pension plans to invest more in building Ontario's infrastructure rather than investing their money abroad.

Research is going to become an important force in our provincial economy. We have established the new Ministry of Research and Innovation, which is headed by the Premier. We are establishing a new chair in agricultural research at the University of Guelph. We are proposing a Research and Innovation Council of Ontario to coordinate research priorities and help make Ontario a North American leader in innovation.

Investing in our communities, urban and rural, makes sound economic sense. We are the first government in Ontario history to deliver gas tax dollars to municipalities for public transit. Recently this government signed a Canada-Ontario affordable housing agreement that will help to provide 15,000 new units of affordable housing. And finally, in 2005-06 we're investing \$485 million in northern infrastructure, including \$297 million to renew and expand northern highways.

1610

A key ingredient in the growth of our economy is continued investment in Ontario. What we have done with this bill before us is to ensure just that: that there will be continued investment in Ontario. In this bill, we are introducing amendments to the Corporations Tax Act that will amend the Ontario film and television tax credit. Investing in the entertainment and creative cluster enhances our economy. The film and television sector, for example, generates \$2 billion a year and employs more than 20,000 people. Our government supports cultural industries that bring together talent and technology to create jobs. If approved by the Legislature, this bill would allow us to invest \$48 million in two tax credits that would increase the Ontario film and television tax credit for domestic productions from 20% to 30% for five years and maintain the 10% regional bonus credit, and secondly, the Ontario production services tax credit for foreign productions from 11% to 18%, subject to review before the end of 2005. These changes would be retroactive to January 1, 2005.

We've also proposed in this bill amendments that would eliminate certain restrictions on the computer animation and special effects tax credit for eligible labour expenditures incurred after May 11 of this year.

The eminent British Prime Minister and statesman Sir Winston Churchill said, "There is no finer investment for any community than putting milk into babies." I think Sir Winston had it exactly right, in metaphorical as well as literal terms. He knew, and we knew, that in order to achieve success in a society, we must be collectively prepared to invest in its most basic elements. As the Premier often says, our people are our greatest asset.

Today, we are implementing our plan to invest in the future, in better education from the early years to the

most sophisticated graduate degree, in more timely and compassionate health care, and in a stronger, more productive economy.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this debate.

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge):**

Let me say how pleased I am today to be able to rise in the Legislature and follow the Minister of Finance in his first major address in his most recent portfolio. It's been my distinct pleasure these past few months to work directly with both Ministers of Finance, who have done such an outstanding job in their respective portfolios in both finance and energy during the first two years of our mandate. I can assure this House that the Ministry of Finance has been and continues to be in the hands of stellar ministers.

I'm pleased today to be able to speak to Bill 197, the Budget Measures Act, 2005. I have the privilege of providing you and the members of the Legislature with some additional details of this legislation, which seeks to enact elements of our second budget, these being matters I'll speak to in addition to those that the minister has referenced.

The budget bill covers a wide array of topics. For example, it contains amendments to some 11 statutes and proposes changes to three others, from the Assessment Act to the Retail Sales Tax Act. For our purposes today, I am going to group these proposals under three broad categories—those that support investment and innovation, those that advance our Reaching Higher agenda, and those that are about good government and responsible management—and limit my comments to a few budget measure initiatives only.

A few minutes ago, the minister mentioned our proposed amendments to the Ontario film and television tax credit and the Ontario production services tax credit. First announced last December, these changes would help enhance the province's support for a vital sector of our economy.

We all know that Ontario-produced films and television have captured the world's attention and have, in turn, brought the world to Ontario. For example, just last winter, scenes of the popular television drama *The West Wing*, which many of us, when we have an evening free from here, might turn on, were shot right here in southern Ontario. I can tell you that in my hometown and riding of Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge there's a tremendous amount of filming ongoing, and as early as this week there's consideration for a major shoot to occur in the municipality.

In addition to its cultural impact, the film and television sector is a major economic force. Our most recent figures show that it creates \$2 billion a year in economic activity and employs some 20,000 people. These people do a variety of work: There are actors, directors and production assistants, right down to those who support the craft services. Thousands of people contribute to this industry.

The introduction of this measure certainly has drawn positive responses from the industry. If I can quote,



"They've solved a beauty today. This is going to be the best year I've put in in a long, long time"—Gordon Pinsent, CFRB radio, in December 2004. Then a further quote: "I know several people who have lost their houses, people who are really desperate, so we needed this very badly." Shirley Douglas on CFRB radio in December 2004.

To reiterate, we've proposed additional support for this industry that would increase the Ontario film and television tax credit for domestic productions from 20% to 30% for five years and maintain the 10% regional bonus credit, and increase the Ontario production services tax credit for foreign production from 11% to 18% for a one-year period to March 2006.

We've also proposed to eliminate the 48% restriction on qualifying costs for the Ontario computer animation and special effects tax credit, effective for the portion of the corporations Ontario labour expenditure incurred after May 11, 2005. This and other related changes would provide for consistency with the rules for the Ontario film and television tax credit. Again, our great province has developed a global reputation for leading-edge animation and special effects. Our graduates and professionals today have joined the ranks of the biggest names in the business. So, in addition to the creative element, we're proposing these changes to make the sector even more attractive to investors, and the industry has recognized this. It's important. I quote: "I want to personally thank you for stepping up to the plate on the film and television industry tax credits. You have been receptive and understanding, and your commitment to the industry is both recognized and enormously appreciated.... We in the film and television industry will be singing the praises of the McGuinty government for years to come. Once again, our sincere thanks." That was from Mark Prior, president of ComWeb, in December 2004.

This is a quote from Sarah Ker-Hornell, managing director of FilmOntario, May 2005: "Increased tax credits and government investment in the film and TV industry are already paying dividends with a high volume of production in Ontario. That means more jobs for Ontario workers and more confidence for industry growth. This budget bill, with its commitment, shows the government is delivering. I urge all political parties to support these highly effective and much appreciated film industry measures."

Another type of investor that I would like to spend a moment speaking about is one who has put money into labour-sponsored investment funds. In this bill, the proposed amendments would give legislative effect to our plan to phase out our tax credit for these funds by the end of the 2010 taxation year.

When these provincial tax credits were first introduced in 1991, the province's venture capital sector was at a much different stage than it is today. Our government is putting in place a number of programs to help build and sustain the sector. These include:

- a new Ministry of Research and Innovation, led by the Premier;

- a new Ontario research and innovation council to provide expert advice and develop strategies to increase opportunities for innovation;

- a \$27-million Ontario research commercialization program to help public research institutions attract early-stage investment;

- a \$36-million Ontario commercialization investment fund program to help encourage investment in new technology companies;

- \$10 million to support the establishment of the McMaster innovation park in Hamilton; and

- \$6.5 million over three years for the new MaRS medical and related science discovery district to help market new Ontario technologies to the world.

Consultations with the industry are continuing in order to develop a transition plan that will allow the LSIF managers to adjust to the end of the tax credit.

1620

Let me turn my attention now—and yours, Mr. Speaker—to the elements of the bill that support our Reaching Higher plan. As members will recall, one year ago the McGuinty government took the bold step of introducing the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act. Although the provisions of this act apply to the government itself, we believe that its spirit can and should apply to other areas of the public sector. To that end, this bill proposes to make Ontario's universities subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and ensure that Ontario's publicly funded post-secondary institutions are even more transparent and accountable to the people of Ontario. That will be both our universities and our colleges of applied arts and science. So as not to jeopardize the work being done at these institutions, though, the freedom-of-information provision would take into account and respect academic freedom and competitiveness. The bill also proposes to establish a new arm's-length Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario to take a lead role in supporting quality improvements in post-secondary education.

The 2005 budget recognizes that many Ontarians are choosing to pursue training opportunities at private career colleges. To ensure the quality of vocational programs offered at these colleges and protect student interest, the budget proposes to introduce the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005. This legislation would, among other measures, establish a superintendent. The superintendent will oversee such colleges, implement an insurance fund to protect students in the event of a college's bankruptcy and ensure that only registered, approved colleges can operate in the province. I would like, just for a moment or so, to refer to some of the details with respect to the new superintendent from within the act itself. The act specifically states, under schedule L:

"Under the new act, the superintendent of private career colleges is authorized to issue policy directives that are binding on private career colleges setting out standards, performance indicators and performance ob-



jectives for vocational programs, as well as the credentials that may be granted for different classes of programs.

"In order to be registered to operate a private career college, or to renew a registration, the superintendent of private career colleges must be satisfied that the applicant will operate the college in accordance with the law, that the vocational programs provided at the college will meet the requirements of the act and the regulations and that the applicant is financially viable. In addition, the superintendent must be satisfied that the registration is in the public interest."

Finally, I would like to address some of the good government measures in this bill. These measures emphasize our prudent management of the taxpayers' investment in this government. One thing this bill will do is to authorize the borrowing of up to \$7.1 billion, if required. This money would be invested in the government's programs, services and other related costs. No one should interpret this borrowing provision as anything more than the routine business of government.

Our fiscal plan is on track. We've achieved great success in reducing the deficit that was inherited. We will continue to manage our revenues and expenditures in a fiscally responsible manner.

This bill also proposes a streamlining of tax remission procedures. Current legislation allows the Minister of Finance to recommend to the Lieutenant Governor the remission of any tax, fee or penalty when considered to be in the public interest to do so. Under our proposed changes, the minister would have the authority to approve such a remission of \$10,000 or less in cases of public interest.

As the minister indicated earlier, and other members of our government, including Premier McGuinty, have said on so many occasions, our plan is working. Since we came into office just two years ago, we've seen thousands of new jobs created. We've seen major companies such as Toyota commit to additional investment in the province. And the deficit, which had stood at some \$5.5 billion in the 2003-04 fiscal year, is now at \$1.6 billion.

However, the future is not without risk. But I believe that our budget and this legislation do a commendable job of managing those risks and preparing Ontario for the success that awaits us all. I'm proud of the steps our government is taking, both in this bill and across the board, to help us achieve that success.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** I'm pleased to comment to the Minister of Finance and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance. I would congratulate this minister on his new responsibilities if he were here. He has certainly worked hard in the energy sector.

I don't actually disagree with everything in this bill. I think this is one of the challenges we face on a budget bill. The budget bill is, if you have confidence in the government's management of the province's finances. If I had to answer that question, it would be an unequivocal

no. There are parts of this budget, parts of the schedules contained in this legislation, that I don't think are a bad thing, and when some of them go to committee, you may very well get members from the official opposition supporting some of the issues. Our finance critic, Tim Hudak, will be able to speak to that when he does his leadoff speech. Not everything in this legislation is bad. I do take issue with some of it, though.

This government, in my judgment, committed massive electoral fraud. They sought election on a platform they have not followed through on.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: To accuse the government of massive electoral fraud I think is an infringement of the standing orders.

**Mr. Baird:** Which one?

**Mr. Delaney:** Standing order 13(i).

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Nepean-Carleton knows it is the obligation of the Speaker to attempt to maintain decorum in the House. His comment has obviously offended a number of members of the House, and I would ask him to please withdraw the comment.

**Mr. Baird:** I withdraw, Speaker, but it clearly is not unparliamentary. I accept your order. As you say, it's bringing disorder in the House, but this government sought election on promises it did not keep. They promised to hold a referendum before any tax increase and nothing in the financial circumstances of the province's finances prevented them from following through on their election platform. There is one word the people of Ontario think of when it comes to the financial management of this government and its incompetence and misrepresentation—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you very much. Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I listened with some interest to the new Minister of Finance. He quoted Sir Winston Churchill, who, of all the people on this planet or certainly in this last, past century, was probably one of the most erudite, most quotable people. The quote was rather good, although I couldn't write it down fast enough, that nothing is better for a government or a people to do than to give milk to babies. I think that's a pretty good quote.

Having said that, I am perplexed, flabbergasted and completely at a loss to understand why he would quote such a statement when the government of which he is the finance minister does exactly the opposite. They take milk from babies, from the poorest children in this province, from the poorest children in this land. For those who have the temerity, the misfortunate, the bad luck of being the children of parents who are on Ontario Works or on ODSP, this government chooses to claw back the very money that is meant to provide milk to those children.

I am at a loss to understand why the finance minister would say that, and then give them only \$3 per month out of the \$32 per month that the federal government gives in the national child benefit program. If he truly believes



that the best thing this government can do and a people can do is to look after our children, and to make sure they do not go to bed hungry and to make sure they have nutritious food, then I would suggest he should do a whole lot better than misappropriately quote Sir Winston Churchill. He needs to act upon the very thing in which he is failing, the very fact of the budget which is not there. This government has done literally nothing for the poorest of poor children and, in that, you should be ashamed.

1630

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** It's a privilege to rise, as well, as a member of the government on this particular budget measure.

Of course there are many, many things that one could itemize, whether we're talking about infrastructure or taxation or new roads and highways and so on. The thing I wanted to address, with your indulgence, is the considerable strides that we as a government are making on the integration of new and newer Canadians into the workforce, in particular, for example—a file that I often interact with in my other capacity as a physician—regarding international medical graduates.

For the first time in living memory we have now a government in power, the McGuinty government, that actually takes the needs and the hurdles of international medical graduates seriously. This is part and parcel of the general plan to address the physician shortage, the shortage of family doctors that we inherited from the previous regime.

There are a number of items: for example, the strengthening of IMG-Ontario, essentially a clearing house and information portal, if you will, in which foreign medical graduates can actually have themselves assessed, have their credentials assessed, and then really in a single one-stop shopping figure out how they can best integrate themselves into the Ontario system; whether we are talking about bridge training financing; whether we are talking about increasing other options—into, say, radiology or as a lab technician or an ultrasonographer, for physicians from other countries who may wish to integrate into other health-care-related fields—or simply increasing the number of spots available.

All of these things are resulting in measurable improvements on the ground.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to respond to the opening speech from the Minister of Finance on Bill 197, and also to the member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge.

The minister was talking about the new jobs they've created. Well, I just don't believe their numbers. From what I understand, we've lost 42,000 good manufacturing jobs in this province in the past year. When members like the member from Simcoe–Grey talk about the plants that are closing in the Collingwood area, those are the numbers I tend to believe.

We're seeing the fourth fiscal plan from this government in two years. So, frankly, I just don't believe their

numbers. The minister talked about, as they like to, this inherited deficit and how they have supposedly reduced the deficit by \$4 billion, I think he said. What about the \$4 billion that the Provincial Auditor forced you to change the accounting on because of the games you were playing? Those were the non-utility generators, the NUGs, the stranded debt from Ontario Hydro that you had in your first budget, but you were counting \$4 billion of revenue that you really weren't receiving. I just don't buy the numbers of this government.

I believe the Provincial Auditor; he made you change the rules and change the way you were accounting that \$4 billion. You like to spin these things for your political good, but I just don't buy it.

What we're really seeing is an increased debt to the people of this province. In the past year we had a good year because the people and businesses of this province over-performed and, as a result, the government had increased tax revenues. You talk about discipline. You're not showing any discipline at all. In fact, you've spent every dime of this increased revenue that the people of Ontario have generated through their hard work, and more, so that we are still running deficits. You talk about maybe having a balanced budget by 2008-09. With any amount of luck, there will be a different government in 2008-09.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time for questions and comments. The member for Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Arthurs:** On behalf of the minister and myself, I want to thank the members for Nepean–Carleton, Beaches–East York, Etobicoke North and Parry Sound–Muskoka for their comments with respect to the second reading opening on the Budget Measures Actl.

I found the opening comments by the member for Nepean–Carleton rather interesting. It's my recollection that his government and its last finance minister left the people of Ontario with a deficit in the mid \$5.5-billion range, with the continuous claim up to and including election day that it was a balanced budget. If there was any distortion of the truth in the context of what the public interest was, I would suggest it was left by the former government.

I appreciate the comments of other members. Across to the member from Beaches–East York, the challenges remain to be able to provide for those in the greatest need in the province of Ontario. The government will be addressing those matters on a go-forward basis, as we did in our first budget. We are focused on our core agenda and we're going to remain there. We are focused on the health and education requirements of this province, on the economy and on a clean and green environment.

The budget measures we have in place currently have taken that \$5.5-billion deficit and driven it down to \$1.6 billion, as reported for the end of March of the fiscal year we had currently just entered into at that point in time.

The way ahead at this point for our government is very positive. The opportunities for the people of Ontario are extremely positive. We will stay focused both on our



revenue and our expenditure sides to ensure we meet our goals and the goals of the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask for unanimous consent to stand down our lead.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Leeds–Grenville has sought the unanimous consent of the House to stand down the lead speech from the official opposition. Is there such consent in the House? Agreed.

**Mr. Runciman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity. We've heard just in this brief time during the debate the reiteration of the "woe is me" story from the members of the Liberal government on the situation they found themselves in following the 2003 election. The reality is they found themselves in a situation that could have been addressed and should have been addressed in terms of achieving a balanced budget for that fiscal year. They don't talk about the fact that they were responsible for the government of Ontario for the last six months of that fiscal year.

We knew there were challenges. Anyone who went through SARS and the blackout and the challenges that we did in Ontario knew our fiscal projections were going to fall short. But we were prepared, if we had continued to be the government, to meet those challenges and keep our promise to have a balanced budget for that fiscal year, unlike the Liberal McGuinty government, which made a similar promise but then failed to keep it, blamed it on the former government and then spent like madmen for the six months they had control of the purse strings in that fiscal year.

Of course the other element of that is that when they came into office, they knew this was an opportunity to blame this on the big, bad former government, and to increase spending and increase taxes despite the very memorable commitments the Premier made in television advertising during the election campaign. The element they don't talk about was the tie-in to that promise, "If indeed we discover or find reasons that necessitate us increasing taxes, we will go to the people. We will have a referendum. We will make our case before the people of the province of Ontario, and only then will we increase taxes."

Of course we know that was another broken promise, one they fail to refer to when they stand up on their feet here and say, "Oh, well, we had to deal with the mess that was left on our doorstep." There were challenges left on your doorstep, but when you come into government you know there are going to be challenges. They were challenges that could have been met, could have been addressed. You could have had a balanced budget for the fiscal year 2003. You weren't prepared to do that. You looked for the easy way out. You looked for ways in which to deceive the public of Ontario with respect to the real plans you had in terms of increasing spending in a dramatic way. A broken promise is—

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** You said you had a balanced budget—\$6.2 billion.

1640

**The Acting Speaker:** I would ask the member opposite to the member who has the floor to please refrain from heckling. I recognize again the member for Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Runciman:** We know the McGuinty government has become very well known for broken promises. We've seen that in public polling, where there is a word used to describe the Premier, which is not parliamentary, and I won't use it, but this is top of mind without prompting. A significant number of people describe the Premier with one four-letter word. In terms of the respect for all of us in this place, I think that's sad. I really believe it's sad that the Premier of the province of Ontario is considered by a majority of Ontarians with one four-letter word in terms of describing him and what they think of him. That's all surrounding the broken promises and the most significant one that I already talked about.

We have counted up 50 broken promises on that long laundry list of 230 promises they made, promises they made to the people of Ontario in order to get elected, in order to become the government. Now 50 of them have been broken.

**Mr. Patten:** Send the list over.

**Mr. Runciman:** The member would like to see a list of them. Well, I'd be glad to make sure that I bring a list into the House for him to consider. He may be surprised that his own party, his own government, has broken such a significant number of promises.

I want to just mention a couple of those. Nursing homes: We know the dire straits that many nursing homes in this province, public and private, are facing with respect to commitments made by the current government. In the election campaign, they were going to increase funding by \$6,000 per resident. They haven't come close to that, but they've imposed new requirements on these nursing homes, and it is extremely, extremely difficult.

I read into the record comments from Sherwood Park Manor, a non-profit in my riding that is having an extremely difficult time, cutting back on things that they should not have to cut back on because of requirements placed on them by the Liberal government and the shortfall in funding and their failure to meet that promise. They can't hire nurses. We know in terms of competition for nurses that it's very difficult, and they're facing the fact now that they cannot afford to pay the hourly rates that nurses are getting in the province of Ontario. So they can't compete.

There are significant problems in many of our nursing homes, and I would ask the government to reconsider that broken promise and meet the needs of these homes, fulfill a promise you made in 2003 to get the votes and support and to become the government of the province of Ontario.

I will just briefly mention agriculture. Again, there are significant and growing problems in the agricultural sector of this province. Rural communities, and not just the farming communities, but the people who supply the



farming communities—the grocery stores, the feed dealers, the farm implement dealers—are all taking on increasing debt loads as a result of low commodity prices, weather challenges and the lack of support from the Liberal government of Ontario.

When they ran for office, they said, “We’re going to make agriculture a lead ministry.” Of course, we now know that in the last budget, they cut the agriculture budget by well over \$100 million. We know it is not a lead ministry, and we know that these problems are going to continue.

In terms of a commitment in agriculture, Mr. Barrett—I’ll have to get his riding, Mr. Speaker—the member for Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant, has raised the plight of tobacco farmers in this province and the commitments they made to help tobacco farmers make the transition from tobacco to other products because of the legislation and the controls brought in by the Liberal government, and the impact that’s having on tobacco farmers. We know that those promises have not been fulfilled. We now see some of the peripheral damage—collateral damage, I guess—of this war on tobacco, with the announcement of close to 600 of the best jobs in the Guelph area now being lost to that community. I think it’s 88 jobs in Aylmer that are being lost because of Imperial Tobacco’s decision now to move those jobs to Quebec. That’s collateral damage and one that the Liberal government likes to ignore.

We heard the Minister of Economic Development today when he was asked a specific question about the challenges and the plight of the workers, and the challenges now facing the community of Guelph and surrounding area losing close to 600 jobs, with average salaries, I understand from press reports, in the neighbourhood of \$80,000 per annum. What is the impact going to be on that community and the families that are going to be impacted by this? I think it’s very significant. The minister did not have any response in any way, shape or form. He started to talk about Woodstock. That was an insult to the people of Guelph, the workers and employees and their families who had this bad news, this dramatic news dropped on them last week. There was no meaningful response; in fact, evasion. That’s a pretty sad commentary.

Of course, we’re seeing that sort of thing—significant loss of manufacturing jobs in this province—year over year. From September to September, we saw 42,000 manufacturing jobs lost in the province of Ontario. Last week, the member from Brant was talking about his own riding and how well they’re doing. Well, that’s good; we’re glad to hear that. There certainly are pockets in the province that are continuing to do well, but many, many other regions and areas of this province are suffering, are losing manufacturing jobs, are losing the good-paying jobs in their communities, which are being replaced in many respects by service jobs—the Wal-Mart jobs, Home Depot jobs—the kinds of jobs that do not meet the remuneration levels that many of our communities have looked to and expected. We may not see the impacts over the next 12, 16 or 18 months, but ultimately the loss of

those manufacturing jobs and the continuing erosion of the manufacturing base in Ontario is going to hurt, and it is going to hurt big time.

We see people leaving this province. We hear that a company from the Sarnia area is leaving because of Bill 133. It’s moving to the United States. We know of the uncertainty surrounding energy costs and the government’s intransigence with respect to coal-fired generation and looking at clean coal as an alternative, and looking at the report—I forget what the foundation was—of a few weeks ago saying that some of Ontario’s coal generation is the cleanest in North America. It’s in the top four or five in terms of clean generation in North America, yet this government has the ideological blinkers on and is moving ahead, and damn the torpedoes. What that means, really, is, “Damn the jobs, the living conditions and the standard of living in this province, because we don’t care if people are going to move out, and we don’t care if jobs are going to be lost.” That’s the indirect message they are sending by refusing to consider the impact of some of this hard-headed logic that they’re applying to this challenge.

We read where in the United States, like it or not—and in many respects, we don’t like it—Mr. Bush has removed all of the environmental requirements placed on coal generation at the moment because of what has happened with Hurricane Katrina. There were some heavy-duty restrictions through the EPA that were placed on them. He has now removed those, and there is some suggestion that they may be removed indefinitely. We know that Michigan, which is a significant competitor of ours, is moving in a big way to new coal generation. Yet again, we’re burying our heads in the sand and saying, “I guess those jobs don’t matter, because we’re going to shut down coal.” Obviously, they made a promise. This is one promise that I think we’re prepared to see them bring a more common sense approach to and work with us and with the people in the province who have made this a prosperous place for so many generations and a good place to live, work and raise a family.

1650

I want to spend a few minutes talking about another broken promise, and that’s on the law and order side, the policing side. We heard a bit of a revelation here today, in response to a question to the Premier about the 1,000 police officers that they promised, in their 230 promises, to put on the streets in Ontario. The Premier said, “We already have 400 of them out there.” Well, this is news to me and I think it’s news to virtually everyone in the policing community. They haven’t told anyone about this. But now, all of a sudden, as part of this program, they have 400 people who have already been hired by police services. That is not part of their promise. The minister gets up and talks about attrition, retirements, people moving on to new occupations or professions. That’s not part of the promise. There was no asterisk beside this promise. It was, “We will put 1,000 new officers on the streets in Ontario,” not, “We’ll only do this if the municipalities come up with 50 cents on the



dollar. We'll only do this in certain circumstances." There was a very clear, unequivocal commitment which is not being met.

We've heard this government, especially the Attorney General—who has never seen a TV camera he doesn't like. He has these press conferences at the drop of a hat, with nothing to say. I went to one a few weeks ago—and I'm sure the Toronto chief of police, Mr. Blair, was embarrassed by the emptiness of that press conference—where the minister talked about doing certain things, but he had no plans, no budget and no calendar in terms of how these things would occur. He was just getting back from his holiday—he had a great tan—saw the headlines and said, "Boy, we better do something about it." He jumped into the press gallery downstairs and gave this empty performance. As I said, I'm sure Chief Blair was embarrassed that he was dragged into that situation.

We had another press conference today, again falling short on facts and statistics with respect to what's going to happen. We know they have announced putting additional crowns into the area, and police officers. The curious one was the police officers. We don't know where these crowns are coming from and we don't know where these police are coming from. The minister was asked a specific question in the House today: "Where are these 26 police officers coming from? Do you have commitments from Peel, Durham, Halton, the OPP or the RCMP?" What he's talking about here apparently is a joint task force, without any commitments from any other service in Ontario.

Why would you go out and make an announcement that you're going to be dragging in or drawing in—whatever the term might be—police officers from other jurisdictions without having those commitments down solid? Why would you do that, other than the fact that you're reacting to the headline of the day and the poll that was in the media yesterday that crime and gun crime in Toronto are the number one concern of Torontonians? That's why you would do it, I guess, if you're that shallow, if you really do not have a plan or a commitment to ensure public safety. That's why you would do it.

I've said from day one that I think the Attorney General and his colleagues who get up and talk about this issue—it's phony. It's a shell game. They don't have a real commitment. We know they're looking at cuts in the justice ministries of over \$300 million. We've already heard about the possibility of transferring the Ontario board of parole to the federal board. What a horror story. Look at the people they've let out who have committed horrendous crimes, and now they have the gall, because they can possibly save a few million dollars, to transfer that critically important public safety responsibility to that parole board. That's the sort of thing they're looking at. They're looking at closing down the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. We've got a backlog on that board of 10,000 crime victims who are not being addressed. That's the sort of thing the Attorney General doesn't like to talk about.

I mentioned today that they made a big announcement early last October that they were going to provide the Toronto Police Service with \$5 million for the porn unit. Well, as of today, not one dollar has been transferred to that unit in the Toronto Police Service—not one dollar—although, with great fanfare, the Attorney General said, "Oh, boy, are we doing something to fight porn crime in the city of Toronto."

I mentioned yesterday during question period—and didn't get an answer, of course, from the Attorney General; he got up and did his usual bafflelegab act—the fact that we read in the paper that the families who are victims of Karla Homolka, the French family and the Mahaffy family, couldn't afford to go to Ms. Homolka's appeal hearing in Montreal. Their attorney, Mr. Danson, was going and he was paying his expenses to attend this hearing out of his own pocket.

The government has a surplus of \$40 million in the victims' justice fund, and we cannot advise the French family, the Mahaffy family and their counsel at the hearing, "If you wish to attend, we will make sure that your costs are covered." Who paid for the Attorney General's staff when this was a big public relations coup for them to travel to Quebec? The taxpayers paid for it, and here the French family, the Mahaffy family and Mr. Danson are having to dig into their own pockets. This is shameful, and the minister again refused to respond to that. He got up, but I don't know what he was talking about: "I have a great relationship with Mr. Danson and I have a great relationship with"—yes, you do. It's always "I, I, I, I" with the Attorney General: "I have this; I have that." We know what you have and it's one heck of a big ego.

We can talk about the victims' office, what has happened with the emaciation of the victims' office in the Attorney General's ministry; we can talk about some of the things they're looking at: pre-charge diversion. We know they closed the young offenders boot camp. We know now about young offenders who steal cars. What are they getting for it? A warning letter.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Prue:** I listened to the honourable member and what he had to say. He has made one very good point that I think needs to be reiterated: If this government is intent upon saving money by closing down the probation and parole office and transferring that responsibility to the federal government, you are likely making a very great mistake.

Prior to being a full-time politician, prior to being the mayor of East York and prior to coming to this Legislature, I worked for some 20 years in the immigration department and dealt with probation and parole officials across this country. I dealt with federal officials and with Ontario officials. Let me tell you, the federal officials were overworked, they were underpaid, they had too much of a caseload and they did not have the same handle on dealing with people on probation and parole as their Ontario counterparts did.

I do acknowledge it was some 10 years ago that I left there and came into full-time political office, but I doubt



that anything much has changed. The federal government has not put the kind of money that is necessary in there to adequately deal with those people who are coming out of the criminal justice system, nor have they put in the funds that are necessary to protect the Canadian public. I would have to agree with the honourable member when he is concerned about that.

Also lost in this whole thing about public safety are other places you're looking to send provincial civil servants to the federal sphere. I'm thinking most concernedly about the transfer of the audit branch to the federal government. You are doing that to save a few dollars, I think, but that is quite misplaced as well. You are sending trained professionals, who make far more money in terms of tax money for Ontario than it actually costs, to a federal government that is overburdened, overworked and simply not able to deal adequately with the task before them and definitely cannot do as good a job for Ontario as our own workforce.

**Mr. Delaney:** Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the statements from the member for Leeds–Grenville. The member asserts that somehow the former government's \$5.5-billion budget deficit in fiscal year 2003-04 came about on the watch of this government. The facts point otherwise. The member's party, indeed their government, claimed that their budget for that year, 2003-04, was in balance. Less than a month after the election, the Ontario Auditor General estimated that year's budget deficit at \$5.6 billion.

On top of this, one should add the expenses cancelled by our government: its planned \$4.3-billion corporate tax cut and its estimated \$300-million private school tax credit. Adding \$4.6 billion to the final audited deficit figure of \$5.5 billion for the 2003-04 fiscal year shows that Ontarians dodged a \$10-billion budget deficit when they voted in a responsible, fiscally prudent Liberal government.

The member can stand in his place and expound this revisionist fiscal fiction before the people of Ontario, but the people of Ontario aren't buying it. What they are buying is a government that has brought down that Tory budget deficit from the \$5.5 billion our government inherited to a projected \$1.6 billion this year. Ontario's Liberal government has moved toward fiscal sanity with budget measures that have brought jobs, investment and revenue back to Ontario.

Ontario is now North America's leading auto manufacturing jurisdiction. No new investment came in on their watch, but it did on ours. That's what's making Ontario work again. That's why this government will be around for years to come.

1700

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** People will appreciate the fact that the member for Leeds–Grenville mentioned agriculture and the circumstances around our agricultural economy in Ontario. It's quite an appropriate topic to raise in debating a budget measures bill. The member made reference to low commodity prices. The weather: Many of the commod-

ities, fruits and vegetables in particular, were hit very hard with the cold winter we experienced. He would see these problems in his riding of Leeds–Grenville. He would see much of the hit throughout eastern Ontario, much of rural Ontario.

It's a whole other issue to start talking about the pulp and paper problems we're seeing, a primary industry in northern Ontario.

In our ridings, we see this hit with respect to people in rural Ontario spending less money on a restaurant meal, for example. The member made mention of the problems the farm implement dealers are experiencing—and car dealerships. I mentioned earlier today that in my riding alone we have now lost five car dealerships.

I'm very pleased the member for Leeds–Grenville made mention of a very recent disastrous announcement as a result of provincial government policy, as a result of high taxation, which has had an impact on the price of cigarettes. Imperial Tobacco is leaving Ontario as far as manufacturing is concerned.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Barrett:** I heard a bit of a snicker across the way.

In the city of Guelph, as you well know, the plant for du Maurier and Players is losing 555 jobs. Aylmer is losing 80 jobs.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** In response to the comments made by the member for Leeds–Grenville, I want to pick up on the comments he made about the deficit.

I always have found it interesting how the Liberals, after they were elected, have pretended that they had no idea there was going to be a deficit and that they were, oh, so surprised after the election to find that there was going to be a deficit, and then started to use that as an excuse not to meet the promises they had made.

I remind folks who are watching that the Liberal finance critic, Mr. Phillips, was in the estimates committee for the Ministry of Finance in June 2003, before the election was called. He was in that committee, speaking very openly on the public record about the over \$5-billion risk he could see in the budget projections that had been put out by Madam Ecker. He was very clear on the public record that he recognized there was going to be a \$5-billion problem.

But it wasn't just Mr. Phillips. In August 2003, again before the election had been called, Mr. Kwinter, long-serving member of this assembly, told Canadian Press there was a potential \$5-billion deficit facing the province as a result of the Conservative budget. What's interesting, though, is that that didn't stop the Liberals from going out and making over 233 election promises—promises they knew they couldn't keep because of the deficit risk they themselves had identified. So it's always astonishing to me to hear the Liberals act so surprised about a deficit that their finance critic and another long-serving member of their party had talked openly about. They shouldn't have made the promises they did, because it was clear they had no intention of keeping them.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Leeds–Grenville has two minutes to respond.



**Mr. Runciman:** I appreciate the interventions, even the one I didn't agree with. The reality is that we only have a brief time to get our concerns on the record, and there were many others I wished to put forward.

Just quickly, there is a meeting in my riding—I believe it's this evening—dealing with the consideration at the federal level of placing a tariff on corn products coming in from the United States. Casco's a significant employer in my riding. In Cardinal, it's the last large manufacturing operation. I wrote to the Minister of Economic Development a few weeks ago, asking him to intervene. There are three Casco plants in Ontario that are in jeopardy if this tariff goes through. I have yet to receive a response. This is the sort of thing we would hope our minister and our government would be proactive on.

Hospital cuts: We know this in my area, and I know this is the case in terms of the Brockville General Hospital, closing beds, closing a ward, closing a lab, reducing operating time, all because of the demands and requirements of the Liberal government. That's the reality. We've lost our walk-in clinic in the city of Brockville. There's a dramatic shortage of doctors.

There are a couple of other things I wished to put on the record. The Minister of Health says he's not in support of this, but we talked about the lack of concern and understanding of rural Ontario. What we see is the Minister of Health, through his agents, attacking farm markets, potluck dinners, church and school bake sales. That's their understanding and appreciation of the history of rural Ontario. That's the sort of thing they're doing, and it's shameful.

On cormorants—the senator in New York state—we're having real problems with the fishery in the St. Lawrence, and the Ontario government will do nothing about cormorants.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Prue:** Here I am, standing here six months after the budget was proclaimed in this House. It has taken six months for most of this debate to take place. World events have overtaken us. There have been a number of hurricanes, political parties have come and gone in the world, and elections have taken place. Six whole months have gone by, and I would think that anybody watching would think of this almost as *déjà vu*. Why are we sitting here discussing the events of six months ago, when so much has taken place? The minister has resigned and we have a new minister. I guess the public should be forgiven for wondering why this debate has taken so long, why the government hasn't ordered it until now, but be that as it may, here we go.

Going back to that fateful day and to what was happening in the province some six months ago, the government and the finance minister stood up and announced there was going to be an increase for hospital funding. To much fanfare, he announced there was going to be a 4.7% increase. That might sound good to some people, except that the hospitals had an itemized and budgeted account that they in fact needed 7%. Most of them said

they could not maintain the services if they were only to get that.

In the six months that have transpired, I think many of them have been proved right. Many are working right to the wire. Although some of them have been successful in keeping costs down, certainly we know that in many cases the backlogs have continued to rise and that doctors are unable to prescribe and do what they believe is necessary for their patients. The hospitals are under increasing stress. We have new programs now called LHINs, and I guess it's just not working according to plan.

1710

When the minister stood up six months ago, he talked about new financing and having money available for hospitals. Today, six months later, we know exactly what that means. It means, in the jargon of the Newspeak of this Parliament, that this is in fact P3 hospitals, those same much-maligned hospitals that members of the Liberal Party used to stand up and blast their Conservative opponents about in the last Parliament. Remember the Minister of Health, two-tier Tony, as he was then known? That's what you called him then, and I'm just wondering what you call yourselves, because in fact what you are delivering in this budget and what you have been doing for the last six months has done more to impact, more to put forward the idea of P3 hospitals and P3 health than anything that two-tier Tony ever did while he was Minister of Health.

You have actually mastered the complete dismantling, the complete beginning of the dismantling, of public health as we know it in Canada. You are more intent upon giving money to private developers and those who would invest in our hospitals and health care system than you are in providing the basic necessities for the people of Ontario.

In fact, in your budget you had a five-year plan of some \$30 billion to go to hospital redevelopment, which on the outside probably doesn't look too bad. The only problem that we as New Democrats have with that is that fully \$5.5 billion of that money—nearly one sixth, or 16.5%, 17%—is going to private financing, to make individuals rich, to make your friends a profit. We believed, and we continue to believe, and we hope we can convince you to go back to what you once said you believed, that every health care dollar that is raised by the public should go to health care. If you raise \$10 from an individual for health care, you should in turn spend \$10 on that health care—not \$8, not \$8.40, whatever the figure is you now have in mind so that someone can make a profit. This is not the way we see public health in Ontario. Your budget is unfolding in the last six months to prove exactly the point that was denied back then.

You talked back then, too, about how much you were spending in a whole bunch of areas and how really all of those ministries that were being flatlined, all of those ministries that weren't getting increases, were actually going to be better off. I take you back to those days. What were the ministries that were going to be better off



with less money, or the same amount of money and not even get the inflation rate? Those were the environment ministries. Can you think for a minute, has what you've done in environment in the last six months been a shining example to the people of this province? I would think not. There have been and continue to be problems in the environmental ministry which cannot be solved because you have not put sufficient monies into it.

**Culture:** I don't remember the last time when I heard anything about culture in this province, and certainly not in the last six months. I haven't heard of any great plans for museums or art galleries. I haven't heard of any great funding or new funding for international shows or Canadian art or Canadian culture. Certainly, it simply has gone off the map.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Lord of the Rings.

**Mr. Prue:** Lord of the Rings. There you go. We've got a show going to open in Toronto. That's what the Minister of Tourism thinks is cultural spending on a grand scale.

**Natural resources:** What has happened in terms of natural resources? I can't think of any great government initiative that has been announced in the last six months related to natural resources. In fact, how could there be when you have cut funds in this vital ministry?

**Agriculture:** We have questions asked in this Legislature daily and weekly about agriculture, the state of farms and farming in Ontario. Certainly I know that my own discussions with farmers—we're going to be seeing the chicken farmers tomorrow—is that all is not well on the farms and in the rural communities of Ontario. They feel neglected. They feel that the money that has been cut out of the programs that used to help them is no longer there.

Last but not least, you cut the monies available for northern development. The last couple of days have seen, I think, a lot of the problem. You've seen the Minister of Northern Development, the Minister of Natural Resources and the ministers responsible for northern Ontario talk about the difficulties of our native communities. You have seen how the lack of funding has made this government struggle through their own inertia, with nowhere to go, no programs, no plans, because you simply have not put the monies there.

I'd like to talk, though, about an issue very dear to my heart. One of my seven critic portfolios has to do with community and social services, and I would like to spend a little bit of time on that.

Prior to the last election, this government announced they were going to completely change the way we deal with the most unfortunate people in our society, those people who have to rely upon Ontario Works, general welfare provisions or Ontarians with disabilities provisions. You talked about how you were going to be fair. You talked about how they hadn't had a raise in some eight years. You talked about how you were going to end the clawback of the poorest of poor children.

I watched in anticipation with this budget. The budget before had given a paltry—and I say paltry—3% to the poorest of the poor on Ontario Works or on ODSP. They actually got their first increase in some eight or nine years. It wasn't very much, but as little as it was and as much as I would stand here and tell you it wasn't enough—and it wasn't—it was at least something.

In this budget, you didn't even have the good grace to give them one cent. You told them there was no money for them. Even though the Harris government had cut them back some 21% in 1995, even though inflation had stripped another 10% or 15% away from their monies, you gave them nothing. In fact, the poorest of the poor in Ontario, those who are disabled, those who are on general welfare—and remember, 46% of those on general welfare are children—get less money today in actual dollars than they got when Mike Harris left this building. I'm quite shocked. I thought the Liberal Party in the last election was trying to put forward a new platform. You said to choose change. Where is the change for the poorest of the poor? Where is the change for those kids? Where is the change for those who see no increase?

But I think the most horrible thing you've done is that you promised them you would end the clawback. You know what the clawback is. That's where the federal government attempts to end child poverty in Canada. It has a brilliant program that was developed some 10 years ago to eradicate child poverty by the year 2000 and funds it into the billions of dollars, making sure the poorest of poor children get money each and every month, similar to what the baby bonus used to be in the days of my youth and I think in the days of the youth of most of the members of this Legislature. They send out some \$32 a month in what can best be described as a baby bonus to the poorest of poor children, so they can have new shoes, so they can have adequate food, so they can have a few dollars to buy milk at school or they can go to a school program with their fellow pupils.

This government does exactly what the Harris government did before it. You might say you're sorry for doing it, but you still do it. You claw back almost all of the money intended for the poorest of the poor. You claw back the money they so desperately need, and there was nothing in this budget that's going to help them. In fact, it simply continued the clawback for another year.

I think back to what Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of Comsoc, Ms. Papatello, had to say about that, and what is being said today bears no resemblance to what was said when you were on this side of the House.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The Tories did it for tax cuts.

**Mr. Prue:** It's being said in the House to me as I speak that this has to do with the Tory tax cuts. I know what Mike Harris did, and you know what he did and we all know what he did, but the problem is what you are doing about it. You have choices and you are not exercising the choices that I believe Liberals should be exercising.

1720

I want to tell you a very poignant story. I was at a function on Saturday night. It was a very wonderful



function. It was the Brooks foundation, on Saturday night. I went to this, and what it is, in a nutshell, is a foundation that has been set up to give scholarships, to give grants and monies to children who are from poor families, from visible minorities, so that they can go on in their education. If they are in public school, they can go on to high school; if they are in high school, they can go to college and/or university. It was a very uplifting, wonderful ceremony, to watch these young people getting monies made available to them. I was not there alone. There were two ministers there. The Minister of Children and Youth Services was there, and the minister of the treasury board was there as well. We were there and we watched this. We got up to make speeches. I did, and so did the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

I want to tell you what she had to say because the story she told was so poignant, was so wonderful. I just want to reiterate what she had to say because I think every Liberal needs to hear what she said about this—not what I say, what she said.

Her story went like this: She went to a school, not in her riding but in Malvern. It was a poor school. It was a school where most of the children are children of recent immigrants and most of the families are poor. Those children come to school and they're bright, they're energetic and they want to learn. She asked them, in a classroom, some 30 of them, what were their dreams, what were their ambitions, what did they want to be when they grew up. No hands went up. She finally bribed them by offering a ticket to the movies if any of them would stand up and say what they wanted to be, what ambition they had. Of course a few hands went up because a ticket to the movies for a poor kid is something really wonderful. She gave tickets for the first five kids. Their responses were, I think, quite typical. You would find these kinds of responses from any sort of middle-class neighbourhood, probably any neighbourhood at all in Ontario and in Canada.

Two of them wanted to be doctors, one of them wanted to be an astronaut, one wanted to be a sports hero and one wanted to be a musician; all, I think, pretty laudable goals. She talked with them and gave out the \$5 or so for each of the kids to go to a movie and was feeling pretty good about that. Then the principal came in and the principal shed some light on it. The principal told her that these were extremely bright kids in this school. These were kids who could make it, or might reasonably be expected to make it, and it was too bad none of them would. The principal told her that these kids could probably compete with any other school in the city or the province, including, and she used the example, Upper Canada College, but the reality was that most of these children, if not all of them, would never finish high school.

I think the minister was shocked, and she said she was shocked. He went on to say the reality was that two thirds of the children in that class came from families who live below the poverty line, and the other third was just scraping by. The minister felt kind of bad, because the

principal went on to say it was very good to give them money for the movies, but none of them would actually get to the movies. To actually get to the movie and plunk your money down to go in and see a show she had rewarded them with, they'd have to go by the TTC and they didn't have carfare, and if they went in there, the other kids would all be eating popcorn and they wouldn't have any. So she shelled out some more money. I think that was a really wonderful thing she did. She gave them \$5 for the movie, she gave them some carfare money, she gave them some money for popcorn, and that was for five kids.

She learned, I think, and she said, a very great lesson, because, and these are her words, "It wasn't enough to simply make the show available. You had to do more than that, to actually give the reward and give these kids an opportunity, because they were too poor to accept the award in and of itself." The reason I've told you this story—this was her story—is that you should all learn from this. If she were here, I think she would be shaking her head in agreement; this was precisely her story.

This is what you are doing as a Liberal Party, as a Liberal government. You are standing up and saying the wonderful job you are doing in terms of education. You're standing up saying that there are more teachers. You're standing up saying that the schools are there and that there is more money for the schools. You're standing up and saying, "That's what we're doing for poverty." I think the minister will tell you that isn't enough.

You can build the schools. Congratulations. You can put in a few more teachers. Congratulations. But in the end, you are not going to be successful with the poorest of the poor children unless they have decent clothes, unless they go to school and they're not hungry, unless they are given motivation and given an opportunity that they can feel equal with their peers. Until you do that, the principal's prognosis is the right one: They will not have a chance and virtually none of the kids in that class will finish high school.

The reason I'm telling you this story is that it's germane to what you're doing in the clawback. Think about what you're doing. You are taking the money from the poorest of the poor children. You are taking it off them, and then you are expecting them to go to your bright and shiny new school, which now has only 20 kids per classroom, and you are not—I think five or 10 years from now, you're going to be absolutely shocked that the dropout rate in those poor communities is going to be identical to what the dropout rate is today.

That is where you have failed. You have failed miserably in understanding poverty. You think that just by providing a schoolroom you are somehow going to alleviate that. It is simply not going to happen. By clawing back that money, you are taking away what they need most: good food, a pair of shoes, some decent clothes and self-respect. Without that, they're not going to be successful.

Why do you do it? When I listened to the previous minister, she said, "Because we fund other programs with it." Do those other programs benefit those poor children?



I think not. I think they benefit the middle class. I think the money goes to child care for middle-class parents. I think the money goes to all kinds of places where the poorest kids don't get an opportunity to use it, or at least not an opportunity to use the money as it was intended.

I'm asking you to think about that. I'm asking you to think in your next budget—because you've already failed in this one—how you can help these children. How can you make sure that they go on school trips? How can you make sure that they can compete? How do you make sure that they have a chance?

I told this story about the minister because of what you've said about students. Yes, you have said a couple of things about students, about the schools and the teachers. But the fees are still too high. Granted, you've frozen them. We want to see you freeze them for the balance of your term—I'm waiting for that to happen—but it wasn't in the budget. I hope it's in next year's budget. You have to make it possible for kids to go to school, to have a reasonable expectation that they can pass and that they can pay the monies back at the end. Without that, too many of the poorest of the poor will simply not attend.

On the whole issue of housing, the federal government has put in \$81 million this year for housing in Ontario, \$81 million which we, as a province, are supposed to match. We didn't do it. You didn't do it. The \$81 million that is there to increase housing for the poorest people in this province is not being spent. In fact, in this budget the minister put in only some \$30 million, which is about one third of what he was supposed to put in, and certainly will not match the federal dollars and certainly will not put up the number of housing units that we need in this province.

Other things: child care. The federal government promised much more money for child care. I know my colleague from Nickel Belt has spoken passionately and has all the facts and figures. They put in a lot of money, and Dalton McGuinty, prior to the election, promised \$300 million for child care. In the last budget and the last throne speech, the only money that is being spent by this government on child care is federal money which is being passed down, and even then, it's not being spent. It's being hoarded, it's being held aside and it's not really being released. There is no money in this budget for child care—absolutely nothing.

1730

This government promised to do some wonderful things for those children who suffer from autism. Now, if there is anything that I am ashamed of when I have to go out on the street and talk to people about what happens in this Legislature, the thing that I am most ashamed to tell them is what is happening to autistic children, or more correctly, what is not happening to autistic children.

I remember the days leading up to the last election. I remember sitting here in the Legislature, when the Conservatives sat on that side and Mr. Baird was the Minister of Community and Social Services. They made no bones about it; he made no bones about it. There

wasn't money for autistic children. John, turn around and tell me if I'm wrong. There was no money. It was too expensive. They weren't going to do it. They weren't. I felt really awful about that. They didn't think the money should be spent there. They didn't think the money should be spent. He's nodding his head. They didn't think the money should be spent on autistic children, because it was simply too expensive. They had other priorities. He was not going to make any promises that he felt he could not keep.

I'll tell you, I didn't like his answer. I admit, I didn't like his answer, sitting on this side, and I think lots of people in the province didn't like his answer. When they saw hope, when they saw Dalton McGuinty say he was going to do something for autistic children, when they saw the commitment and the promise that he would end the discrimination at age six, when they saw the promise that it would be adequately funded—I know that one of my neighbours with an autistic child thought this was something great.

I know that the Quance family, who have been in here many times, told me with no hesitation that they supported the Liberals because they thought this was going to make a great deal of difference for their child. You know, I have to tell you, all of them are supremely disappointed—no one, I think, more than I, because I thought that even though we were only seven members on this side—now eight—at least something was going to happen for the children who, in my mind, needed this more than anyone else in the province.

What do we have? What has this government done? First of all, you've funded hardly anything. Secondly, you've taken the families to court. You've sicced the entire judiciary upon them. You've sent lawyers to argue against them. You put roadblocks in their way when they're fighting. You have not delivered the services.

The Quance family asks simple questions. They have asked simple questions before this budget, during this budget and after this budget. Do you know what their question is? "When can my child be expected to get the service that she needs?"

The child is turning six soon. The child has never had any government services. The community has rallied. The Quances have mortgaged and remortgaged their house. The community has held fundraisers; I have gone to a couple myself. Friends, family and relatives are pouring in money as best they can so that child, their child, can have IBI services, that they can have someone to help her, they can have someone to train her.

The family has noticed remarkable changes, but they ask a simple question, which the minister, after more than a year, did not answer and has failed to answer—I'm hoping the new minister will. We've had meetings with bureaucrats; we've had meetings with the minister's staff. We've had meetings till they're over my head. When can she expect to get government-sponsored, government-approved and government-paid-for IBI? When? Just a date. You know, that has never, ever, ever been answered. All that has been answered is that, should she



not like it, "We'll see you in court." I looked to this budget to see something. It's not there and it's pretty sad.

I looked in some other areas where I am not a critic, looked at what the government is doing. One of them was agriculture. I spoke about this a little earlier—the cut-backs. I listened to the minister some six months ago talking about how they didn't really cut agriculture back, because the year before they had spent a whole bunch of money on mad cow disease and some other things in the province, up over \$1 billion, and the reality was that even though it went down to only half as much, even though the budget was only going to be \$564 million this year, that really wasn't a reduction. This was some kind of Newspeak. It's taken a while for me to figure out that the reality is that even without mad cow disease, bovine spongiform—I forget what the rest of it is.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** Encephalopathy.

**Mr. Prue:** Thank you very much. The member from Perth–Middlesex is from farm country and knows that very well. It would have been \$733 million, so in reality the farm budget has been reduced. I know, in discussions with farmers, that they feel this government has not listened. The government will protest and of course say it has.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Prue:** The government member will protest and invite me to the riding. I've been to your riding several times but not really to too many farms, I must admit. The agricultural community seems not to be very pleased. That's all I'm passing on. I don't think the budget is there that will actually reflect what the farmers of this province need. The farms are dwindling for several reasons. One is because we have become far more productive. It's much easier for the machinery, it's much easier for the factory farms, it's much easier for the big conglomerates to do it than the family farm, and the number of family farms definitely has decreased. I think that may be the way, whether we like it or not, that is likely to happen in the future. There are fewer farmers, but those farmers who remain are making more demands and have a legitimate cause to do so.

I'd like to look at what's happening to our native communities, to the aboriginal peoples, the First Nations of this province. Prior to the last election and even after the election, the Liberal platform was "to build a new partnership with Ontario's aboriginal communities. Key services will reflect the needs of aboriginal communities." That, in a nutshell, was what you had to say about that. I looked again in this budget. I don't see very much for our aboriginal communities; I don't see very much for our First Nations.

Some of the members of this Legislature, including me, had an opportunity to travel on an all-party committee through northern Ontario on a bill that was sponsored by my colleague the member for Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Baird:** A good member.

**Mr. Prue:** A good member and a good bill because that was a revenue-sharing bill that would give oppor-

tunities for First Nations communities to get tax money, similar to what municipalities get when a new industry, a new corporation, a new commercial enterprise enters—if it were to come to Toronto, Toronto has the wherewithal to tax, as do the municipalities in Perth–Middlesex or London or any of the other places we represent. Unfortunately, the aboriginal First Nations communities in many respects do not have this right. They do not have the right to tax or to get the money from corporations. We all know what's happening with De Beers. The diamond mine is going in and the negotiations are taking place around Attawapiskat. I think that's what my colleague the member for Timmins–James Bay was trying to do in his bill. But that's getting away from it just a little.

We had an opportunity to travel. We travelled to some pretty far and remote aboriginal communities, a couple of which had road access and several more which did not. I think some of the more isolated places really opened members' eyes, those who went there for the first time. You could see in those communities the lack of hope; you could see in some of them the despair. With very little effort you could see poverty, you could see poor children, you could see schools that were ramshackle, you could see facilities which were certainly non-existent. But the biggest eye-opener to most of the members who had never travelled to the north before had to have been going to the Northern Store in these communities.

**1740**

There's only one store. It's called a Northern Store. It's run independently. The stuff is flown in. Now, remember, in most of these communities, where unemployment can range as high as 90%, the chief amount of money comes from either Indian Affairs or from welfare provisions, where people have very little money and rely upon the land to provide much of their food. It was the Northern Store where some of the members went in and were shocked. They were absolutely shocked, because a bag of potatoes, which can be bought in Toronto for 97 cents in good times and \$1.97 or \$2.19 when it's out of season, cost \$15 there. A bag of milk, which can be bought for \$4 or \$4.50 in Toronto, cost \$16 in the Northern Store. Some ice cream—the member from Willowdale went in and saw his favourite ice cream and was thinking about getting a little one-pound tub, which in his store he buys for \$2.69; it was \$12 there. He didn't buy it. The list went on and on. Bread: \$4 a loaf. These are the kinds of aboriginal communities we have and this is the problem they have.

Then I looked with despair at this budget. Native affairs was cut by 22.2%, one budget over another: 22.2%. Is it any wonder that the news today, the news yesterday, the news all this week and probably for weeks to come, is about Kashechewan, an aboriginal community on the coast of Hudson Bay on the Albany River which has polluted water, where the children and old people are sick and at risk of dying, where no one is maintaining the infrastructure? The chiefs, as I speak, are



in this building with the Premier and the cabinet, trying to get Ontario to move and to do something. Is it any wonder they are angry with this government for a budget that has done absolutely nothing for them?

In the last two years that the minister has been aware of the problems in Kashechewan, the only action that was taken was to write a letter to his federal counterpart saying that something should be done. That isn't, in my mind, nearly enough. For a Liberal government, for a government that said they were going to build a new partnership with Ontario's aboriginal communities and that the key services will reflect the needs of aboriginal communities, that simply has not been done.

When my colleague from Timmins-James Bay stood up today and asked a question in the House: "Will you declare a state of emergency? Will you start moving these children out, these children who have lesions on their faces, who are sick and vomiting from E. coli in the water?" there was no answer. There was no answer at all. Nothing was said. "We're going to consult with the chiefs. We're going to consult with our federal counterparts." If this isn't an emergency, I don't know what is.

A couple of weeks ago, I have to tell you, with the earthquake in Pakistan, I was actually proud of the Premier. I was proud when he stood up within an hour or two, two hours, and said, "We think this is a natural disaster and the Ontario government"—not the federal government, the Ontario government—"gives \$1 million to the people of Pakistan." I thought that was a very generous offer for a province to make. The federal government made their own, and I'm thankful for that too. That was their real role. But \$1 million in two hours came from the Premier.

I wish the Premier would show the same compassion to our northern communities and our aboriginal peoples that he showed to the people of Pakistan. I think that they are every bit as deserving. I think the natural disaster that is taking place to them on the coast of Hudson Bay and James Bay—the drinking water polluted, sewage backing up, their schools in ruin; their community is simply not situated in the right place—is in fact of monumental proportions to them. It may not be the same number of people dying, because it's sparsely populated. It's not intensely populated like Kashmir, Pakistan and India but it is, all the same, serious to them.

I believe that the Premier and this government have an obligation within this budget—or make up more money, or take it from the contingency fund, which I understand has not been spent. Take it and make the same commitment to them. Bring those children out, bring out those old people who are at risk, and put money into that community.

If any members of this government want to see what should happen to our aboriginal people, you don't have to go very far. If you're up there on James Bay, go to the Ontario side of the bay and look at the communities. Then go to the Quebec side of James Bay and look at theirs, and you will see a contrast that would make us, as Ontarians, ashamed. You will see roads; you will see power; you will see sewage plants and water treatment

plants and enterprises; you will see people with money and hope. On our side you will see no roads, no power, no money, and despair. If Quebec can afford to do it, and tell the federal government they're going to intercede and interfere in what the federal government does, then I think Ontario should be willing to do the same. The kind of commitment we have shown as a province, both with the tsunami disaster and the earthquake in Pakistan, is the kind of commitment we should show to our own people.

Much has been said since the budget about where the money is going to come from. There's a lot of money floating out there, not just in this province, but money that has to be used from the deal that was signed between the Liberals and the NDP federally. If they can sign a deal and think of good things to do with the money in Ottawa, then I would hope you could sign a deal and think that some of the things I'm telling you are a good deal too. They decided that there was some money available in the budget and that there were some new priorities, and they sat down and said, "There's going to be \$1.6 billion for housing, with a separate, earmarked portion for aboriginal housing throughout Canada." That was a deal the New Democrats brought forward that we believed in, and we supported the Liberals when it came to the budget crunch. That kind of money needs to be spent. Ontario needs to tap into it and do something similar.

The federal New Democrats sat down with the Liberals in Ottawa and said, "We need to do more for post-secondary students," and signed a deal that gives \$1.5 billion for post-secondary education and a portion of that money for employment insurance training. We think that's a good deal. We think that's where money should be spent in Ontario as well.

They sat down and signed a deal that will give some \$900 million, nearly \$1 billion, for environmental initiatives, largely based around retrofits to drop the dependency that many communities have on the overuse of energy. They also, in that deal, agreed to the one-cent gas tax transfer to the municipalities. All of those things were possible because there was a budget surplus.

I have stood in this House, and my colleagues have stood in this House, and we have supported, and members of the official opposition have supported, the Premier in terms of the \$23-billion deficit he talks about. We know that Ontario perhaps is getting a bad deal. But the commitment needs to be one and the same, that if some monies are forthcoming, they cannot be, as the Premier suggested last week—I'm still not very happy with the way he answered my question, because it was quoted in the Sudbury Star and in other newspapers across the province that if he got money from the federal government, he would give it back to corporations as a tax decrease.

I wonder where Liberals are, because sometimes I think this is déjà vu for me. Sometimes I think that I'm sitting in this same House four years ago. Sometimes I close my eyes, and from that side I think I still hear Mike Harris, because really this is not what you should be doing. This is not what you promised to do, but it's



certainly what is contained in your budget. I'm telling you that as Liberals, you have to change.

1750

The member from Thornhill is waving me off, as if I don't know what I'm saying. I am eagerly anticipating his contribution to this debate, as I usually do, wondering what he might say.

But in any event, these are some of the problems. This is the budget where you promised to do things; this is the budget where you promised to start making a difference; this is the budget which was supposed to "choose change." Nothing much has changed, but for many, many people in this province—the poor, the aboriginals, the students, the immigrants—this budget has been a disaster.

There is one small item in the few minutes I have left. I realize that I still have 17 minutes—I may have to make up the rest on the next occasion—but in the few minutes I have left today, I would like to deal with a relatively small item—at least to me, until some people came to see me last week—and that is the entire item around the incorporation of health professionals. This was a very small item in the budget, in the budget papers and in Bill 197, the Budget Measures Act. It is the incorporation of health professionals. This had to do with the deal that was struck by the Minister of Health with the doctors in Ontario. It was part of a negotiated package. Of course, we, as members of this House, are not privy to what goes on in those rooms during the negotiations. They are merely reported to us after the event is over.

The first attempt with the doctors failed, as you all remember, and the Minister of Health went back to try it a second time. In his second attempt, he appears to have been successful, but one of the things that was given away and which is contained within this budget is the incorporation of health professionals. This, in a nutshell, allows doctors and dentists—I'm going to get to this in a minute, because I don't understand how the dentists snuck in here—to incorporate and to have their family members—their spouse or their adult children, once they are incorporated—being allowed to claim some of the profits and to pay tax on it because that allows them, as an incorporated entity, to reduce their overall taxes as physicians. In a nutshell, that's what it is.

The doctors wanted this as part of the deal, because I guess there wasn't enough money. So some of them figured, "If I can't earn more money, perhaps I can save the equivalent amount of money by getting around the provisions of the Income Tax Act and the Ontario act." This is, just for the record, specified in sections 3.1 and 3.2—I don't know—of the Business Corporations Act. This is what they were promised.

I have to question this government, but not in terms of the deal, because I think a contract is a contract, and if you sit down, you have to be good for your word, and I guess the minister is going to have to be good for his word. But I was approached by people who wonder, how did the dentists sneak in here? How were the dentists suddenly eligible for the same things that doctors are eligible for? They were of the opinion—and I agree—

why was this limited to doctors, and now dentists, who were not part of the negotiation, but the same thing was not given to chiropractors, chiropodists, therapists, veterinarians and others who are in the medical profession? They have not been granted the same rights. They came to see me and they asked me the question. I have to tell you that I was very perplexed by what was contained in this budget, or the rationale for it. I understand why the doctors were included, because they wanted it, and there would not be peace between the minister, the government and the doctors; they would not sign on to the accord unless they got some of what they were asking for. But I'm very curious, having given it to the doctors, why the government has limited in this budget the incorporation of health professionals to only dentists as another group.

Surely, if it is good for dentists, it is good for these other groups. Surely, if we can incorporate one set of professionals, we should allow other professionals the same access. If it's going to cost the government too much money, then I think you need to make that statement. You need to state why it's going to cost too much money, and you need to say why you are excluding these others groups, because the rationale, quite frankly, escapes me. There are very few of the chiropractors, therapists, veterinarians and chiropodists who would be able to take advantage of this system in comparison, I believe, to the number of doctors who could take advantage of such a tax system. The government has chosen to freeze them out. I have no doubt the same people who came to see me last week also came to see many of you. I think you need to answer that before this debate is over. I'm hoping someone from the government side will stand up and explain the rationale of this particular provision, which up until now I thought was a rather obscure provision of the budget, but now has new poignancy to me. It now has some real meaning.

Mr. Speaker, I can see that my time is fast evaporating. If this is an appropriate time to stop, I would be prepared to do so on your instruction. If you want me to speak for another minute or two, I can go on to another topic. I am entirely in your hands—but I don't think you're hearing it.

Mr. Speaker, I seek your instruction. I could continue for another minute or a few more minutes.

**The Acting Speaker:** I would appreciate it if you could continue for two more minutes.

**Mr. Prue:** This is a real stickler. I thought for sure he wanted to let all the people have an extra couple of minutes for supper, but it appears not. On the next occasion, Mr. Speaker, I was going to talk about a few other provisions, but I guess I'll get to them now.

The first item I wanted to talk about in a little bit of detail was the environmental policy of this government, and in this budget. As you will recognize, and as was stated some six months ago, the environment budget was one of those that was cut back. This causes me some chagrin in view of what happened in Walkerton and in view of what is happening today in Kashechewan and in view of the great many environmental impacts we are starting to see.



We had some women here just a week or two ago, the Ladies of the Lake from Lake Simcoe, who had outlined the industrial and farm runoff into the lake, and the problem it was causing with the water quality and the problem it was causing what is probably Ontario's largest recreation area. There does not seem to be any adequate spending on the environment, anything that has been put forward here in this budget that will reflect what is needed there.

These people are banding together, trying to do things that I believe governments are more capable of doing. They are collecting what must be fairly small sums of money to do citizen-sponsored upgrades in Lake Simcoe. To my mind, the budget should have been the place to have done this. The budget quite clearly is inadequate for the people of the Lake Simcoe area. The member from Simcoe North, I think, put it quite well in his statements before the House.

This is an area we should be trying to protect. It is the closest large recreation area to the city of Toronto and to

the entire Niagara horseshoe. Although we have the Great Lakes below us, it is one of the areas where many people have cottages and many people go for recreation, sports fishing, boating, canoeing and for the sheer enjoyment of what can be described as Canada's near north. It is a place where many of them aspire to retire to and to live. I don't think the measures that have been taken by the environment ministry for that small group of women have been adequate. As I said, they have had to take the matter into their own hands. They have come up with a calendar. It's really quite amusing and quite fun, and I laud them for their efforts. We, as a government, have to be doing more, much more.

I think my time is up, so I'm going to go back to the Ladies of the Lake on the next occasion.

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you very much. It is 6 o'clock and this House stands adjourned until later on this evening at 6:45.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Estimates / Budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Cameron Jackson  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Garfield Dunlop, Andrea Horwath,  
Cameron Jackson, Kuldip Kular, Phil McNeely  
John Milloy, Jim Wilson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Finance and economic affairs /  
Finances et affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Phil McNeely  
Wayne Arthurs, Toby Barrett, Pat Hoy, Judy Marsales,  
Phil McNeely, Carol Mitchell, John O'Toole,  
Michael Prue, John Wilkinson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**General government / Affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Présidente: Linda Jeffrey  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vic Dhillon  
Marilyn Churley, Vic Dhillon, Brad Duguid,  
Linda Jeffrey, Jean-Marc Lalonde,  
Deborah Matthews, Jerry J. Ouellette,  
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Tim Hudak  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Andrea Horwath  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Michael Gravelle,  
Andrea Horwath, Tim Hudak,  
David Oraziotti, Ernie Parsons,  
Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,  
Joseph N. Tascona  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Justice Policy / Justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bob Delaney  
Michael A. Brown, Jim Brownell, Bob Delaney,  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Frank Klees, Peter Kormos,  
Shafiq Qaadri, Mario G. Racco, Elizabeth Witmer  
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bob Delaney  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco  
Donna H. Cansfield, Bob Delaney,  
Ernie Hardeman, Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin,  
Norm Miller, Tim Peterson, Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio  
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Public accounts / Comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro  
Laurel C. Broten, Jim Flaherty, Shelley Martel,  
Bill Mauro, Julia Munro, Richard Patten,  
Liz Sandals, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Regulations and private bills /  
Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Marilyn Churley  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong  
Gilles Bisson, Marilyn Churley, Kim Craiton,  
Kuldip Kular, Gerry Martiniuk, Bill Murdoch,  
Khalil Ramal, Maria Van Bommel, Tony C. Wong  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Social Policy / Politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Mario G. Racco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal  
Ted Arnott, Ted Chudleigh, Kim Craiton,  
Peter Fonseca, Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,  
Mario G. Racco, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O.Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Electoral reform / Réforme électorale**

Chair / Présidente: Caroline Di Cocco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Kuldip Kular, Norm Miller, Richard Patten,  
Michael Prue, Monique M. Smith,  
Norman W. Sterling, Kathleen O.Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes



## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Mardi 25 octobre 2005**

### **PREMIÈRE LECTURE**

<b>Loi de 2005 sur les parcs provinciaux et les réserves de conservation, projet de loi 11, <i>M. Ramsay</i></b>	
Adoptée.....	354

### **DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

#### **Prévention de la criminalité**

M. Bryant .....	355
M. Runciman.....	357
M <sup>me</sup> Churley .....	358

### **DEUXIÈME LECTURE**

<b>Loi de 2005 sur les mesures budgétaires, projet de loi 197, <i>M. Duncan</i></b>	
Débat présumé ajourné.....	389

### **AUTRES TRAVAUX**

#### **Rosa Parks**

M <sup>me</sup> Pupatello .....	359
M <sup>me</sup> Chambers .....	359
M <sup>me</sup> Witmer.....	359
M. Hampton .....	360

# CONTENTS

Tuesday 25 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Vernon White</b>	
Mr. O'Toole .....	351
<b>McMaster University</b>	
Ms. Marsales .....	351
<b>Water quality</b>	
Mr. Miller .....	351
<b>Arie Nerman</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	352
<b>Public libraries</b>	
Mr. Brownell .....	352
<b>Health care</b>	
Mrs. Witmer .....	352
<b>Victims of crime</b>	
Mr. Racco .....	352
<b>Hospice care</b>	
Mrs. Sandals .....	353
<b>Highway improvement</b>	
Mr. Gravelle .....	353

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2005, Bill 11,</b>	
<i>Mr. Ramsay</i>	
Agreed to .....	354

## MOTIONS

<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	354
Agreed to .....	354

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Protection of resources</b>	
Mr. Ramsay .....	354
Mr. Miller .....	357
<b>Crime prevention</b>	
Mr. Bryant .....	355
Mr. Runciman .....	357
Ms. Churley .....	358
<b>Hydro generation</b>	
Mrs. Cansfield .....	356
Mr. Yakabuski .....	358
Mr. Hampton .....	358

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Crime prevention</b>	
Mr. Runciman .....	360
Mr. McGuinty .....	361, 362
Mr. Dunlop .....	361, 369
Mr. Kwinter .....	361, 369
Mr. Hampton .....	362

## Hospital funding

Mr. Hampton .....	363
Mr. McGuinty .....	363

## Public health

Mr. Runciman .....	364
Mr. Smitherman .....	364

## Water quality

Mr. Bisson .....	364
Mr. Ramsay .....	365

## Teacher training

Mr. Brownell .....	365
Mr. Kennedy .....	365

## Tobacco industry

Mr. Arnott .....	366
Mr. Cordiano .....	366
Mr. Barrett .....	366
Mrs. Dombrowsky .....	366

## Justices of the peace

Ms. Horwath .....	366
Mr. Bryant .....	366

## Health care

Mr. Parsons .....	367
Mr. Smitherman .....	367

## Property taxation

Mr. Hudak .....	368
Mr. Duncan .....	368

## Legal aid

Ms. Martel .....	368
Mr. Bryant .....	368

## Ontario Municipal Board

Mr. Flynn .....	369
Mr. Gerretsen .....	369

## Tenant protection

Mr. Prue .....	370
Mr. Gerretsen .....	370

## PETITIONS

### Cancer treatment

Mr. Jackson .....	370
-------------------	-----

### Macular degeneration

Mr. Delaney .....	370
Mr. Flynn .....	371

### Services for the developmentally disabled

Mr. Hardeman .....	370
--------------------	-----

### Immigrants' skills

Mr. Qaadri .....	371
------------------	-----

### Leslie M. Frost centre

Ms. Scott .....	371
-----------------	-----

### Highway 35

Ms. Scott .....	371
-----------------	-----

### Skills training

Mr. Berardinetti .....	372
------------------------	-----

### Volunteer firefighters

Ms. Scott .....	372
-----------------	-----

## SECOND READINGS

<b>Budget Measures Act, 2005, Bill 197,</b>	
<i>Mr. Duncan</i>	
Mr. Duncan .....	372
Mr. Arthurs .....	374, 377
Mr. Baird .....	376
Mr. Prue .....	376, 380, 382
Mr. Qaadri .....	377
Mr. Miller .....	377
Mr. Runciman .....	378, 382
Mr. Delaney .....	381
Mr. Barrett .....	381
Ms. Martel .....	381
Debate deemed adjourned .....	389

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Visitors

The Speaker .....	353
Mr. Watson .....	353
Mr. Wong .....	353
Mr. Prue .....	358

### Rosa Parks

Ms. Pupatello .....	359
Mrs. Chambers .....	359
Mrs. Witmer .....	359
Mr. Hampton .....	360

Continued overleaf





No. 9B

N° 9B

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 25 October 2005

Mardi 25 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.





# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 25 October 2005

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 25 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ADOPTION INFORMATION DISCLOSURE ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 SUR LA DIVULGATION DE RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR LES ADOPTIONS

Ms. Pupatello moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 183, An Act respecting the disclosure of information and records to adopted persons and birth parents /  
Projet de loi 183, Loi traitant de la divulgation de renseignements et de dossiers aux personnes adoptées et à leurs pères ou mères de sang.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the Minister of Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** Thank you very much. Let me tell you how pleased I am—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I'm moving the third reading debate of Bill 183.

**The Acting Speaker:** Ms. Pupatello has moved third reading of Bill 183, and again I recognize the Minister of Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I was ready to go early on.

Let me tell you how pleased I am to be here to address Bill 183 for third reading. I can tell you that having this bill at third reading is indeed making history, and I hope we are going to go even further.

Let me tell you why I'm so pleased. I'm honoured to support a piece of legislation that, if passed, would give Ontario adoptees what the rest of us take for granted: the right to know their personal identity and history. I'm honoured to support legislation that, if passed, would give adoptees the same rights as non-adopted individuals, while allowing those who wish to maintain their privacy and not be contacted to do so.

Before I begin, I must acknowledge the people who are here with us in the House. There are a number of organizations represented here today who we as legislators have met with repeatedly—myself over the last 10 years and certainly over the last two years. Some of us in the House, who I know they'll acknowledge in their own

discussions, have worked with these people for many years on this issue. May I say a very special thank you for your dedication, your patience and your commitment. It is indeed an honour to have worked with you. I didn't expect so many. I would have named you by name, but I don't have enough time in my speech for that.

Let me say that for years, adult adoptees and birth parents have been calling on the province to open our adoption records. Adoptees have told us that knowing about their past would give them purpose and closure to the struggle of coping with not knowing. They told us that just because they were involved with an adoption, they shouldn't be treated any differently; they should have the right to know their history and their identity.

Birth parents have told us heartbreaking stories about having to give up their children due to family pressure or out of fear that they would be ostracized for having a child before they were married and about wondering for years if their child grew up safe and happy. In some cases, they simply wanted to know if their child was alive. They told us that even if they didn't want to be in contact with that child again, or if the child didn't want to be in touch with them, they have an obligation to provide their child with information that they need to know about their past.

Adult adoptees and birth parents have given us a simple message: They simply want the ability to come to peace with their past. They want to know the facts and face the future without being impeded by a lack of knowledge. They want to know that they can keep their past in the past, if that's their wish. And we agree. We agree that adult adoptees should have the same rights as non-adopted individuals: the right to know their identity. We agree that every individual has the right to know about his or her own personal history. We agree that individuals who were involved with an adoption should be able to maintain their right to privacy and not be contacted, and we will go further on this measure.

I'm very happy to be sharing my time tonight with my parliamentary assistant for the last half of my portion of this debate. It's important, because my parliamentary assistant also led this legislation through committee. In that committee, we were presented with hundreds of people who made submissions to the committee and numerous people who came before the committee and spoke first-hand to MPPs from all sides of this House and told their own heart-wrenching stories, all of which has been included in amendments, in the development of our

regulations, to understand all facets of this very complex discussion.

**1850**

The case for change: We introduced Bill 183 in March 2005, exactly 78 years to the day that Ontario began sealing adoption records. That means that some of the current laws governing adoption date back to 1927—almost 80 years ago. That was a time when we had orphanages, insane asylums and homes for unwed mothers. That was a time when unwed mothers were told to give up their child for adoption because that's what societal norms and attitudes of the time dictated. I hope I have time to read to you some of the comments I have heard personally from people, either through the privacy commissioner or through my office directly, their own story about why this is so important.

Currently, there are 57,000 adopted individuals and birth relatives on the adoption disclosure register waiting to be reunited, waiting to learn about their past. Right now, searches to reunite families can take up to three years. Last year, only 887 of the adopted individuals and birth relatives on the register were reunited. We believe individuals should be able to learn about their medical and personal histories without this kind of undue hardship or delay.

During the standing committee on Bill 183, we heard from many people who are directly affected by our proposed legislation. There were 27 presenters who were in favour of opening access to adoption records—90% of those who appeared before the committee. The committee also received 139 written submissions, with 131 in favour—94% in support of this bill.

The ministry also received an awful lot of correspondence from adult adoptees, birth parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of children given to adoption. Out of 834 letters, 82% of these writers support our legislation and open access to adoption records, and most of them chastised the government for not having done this sooner.

We understand that there are those out there who want to keep their past in the past, and we have to be very mindful of this group. In fact, I believe our legislation has to respect this group as well. That's why the proposed legislation allows a person to place a no-contact notice on his or her file. That would require anyone who is receiving that information to commit in writing to honour that no-contact notice or face fines of up to \$50,000. In other jurisdictions, these penalties have been effective. We're not aware of a single individual breaching a no-contact notice anywhere in Canada.

I'd also like to point out that if an adoptee or a birth parent is concerned that they will suffer harm, the legislation would allow them to apply to the Child and Family Services Review Board to prevent disclosure of identifying information. It is not an outright disclosure veto. I don't agree with a disclosure veto. I believe that members of this House—politicians, legislators—are not the ones who are to decide whether information is to be disclosed or not in areas where people may come to potential harm. That, rather, is for a board of experts expressly

put together for this purpose. As well, that simple process of going through that board won't be the type, as has been suggested by others, that would be so inconvenient as to drag people to downtown Toronto, across a panel of strangers, to be grilled about past abuses or such, but a simple process that respects people who may come to harm through the disclosure of information.

An interesting point that all members of the Legislature will be interested in is that when the adoption disclosure laws were opened in Australia, there was no disclosure veto. Following the five-year review of that legislation, they felt it was not necessary to amend the legislation whatsoever, because it had worked so well. Rather than the sky falling, as has been suggested, the Australian experience was one of family reunions and respect for no-contact notices.

I'd like to briefly mention a privacy issue that people are not discussing, and that is that under today's current system, in the absence of government having intervened for protection, there is no privacy protection today for people who want to maintain their right not to be contacted. Adoptees and birth parents today are finding and contacting one another. It's happening every day. There are no laws or regulations that prevent someone from being contacted against his or her wishes. My point is that under our proposed legislation more privacy safeguards would be put in place than even currently exist today. Bill 183, if passed, would actually establish privacy safeguards in the form of no-contact notices and fines of up to \$50,000.

Many of us have heard from the privacy commissioner. That likely is the greatest understatement of my speech today, because she has certainly spent an awful lot of time on this issue. But let's put some things in perspective. The privacy commissioner wrote to us and to others in this House, and I know they'll mention it as well. She says, specifically, "I wish to note that pursuant to subsection 165(5) of the Child and Family Services Act, records relating to adoption fall outside the scope" of her office.

Let's make this clear. I can't explain her unusual activity in this area because it is outside of her jurisdiction. We in fact asked for her opinion and we got it, in volumes, repeatedly. What's important about hearing that discussion is it tells us (a) what an emotional issue this is, and (b) that we have to keep those remarks in perspective as we move forward. What we did through the standing committee was that—what we had suggested from the beginning would be found in regulation around protections we would move by amending the bill, and we'd put those protections that would be found in regulation into the bill. This is important, because even the privacy commissioner has to acknowledge what we have added to strengthen protection in this bill. It's important that she should do that.

Let me say as well that out of all our committee hearings, and we did hear from all sides, we know it is emotionally charged. But we also recognized our responsibility and said that we would ensure that we have a



system for disclosure vetoes where appropriate. We discussed the definition of what it means to come to harm. We've heard lots of episodes and cases. Some she posted on a Web site—individuals who potentially may come to harm. We can't disagree that this may happen. We can't disagree that there are individuals who were born in another era, in another time, who feel this compelled that they'd come to harm should information be disclosed. It's very serious.

But we also felt that in every single case where a disclosure veto might be issued, there is a child in that relationship who, again, will be denied his or her rights to information. And it had better be seriously considered, not by you or by me, or by the member who is having difficulty with my speech tonight, but by experts. Let's acknowledge that there is some expertise required in this area.

I want to talk about a couple of people who have written to us. These are young people.

"I understand that you believe that the identifying information of my birth parents is 'their information,' ... but I believe that that is 'my information.' My DNA, my roots, my heritage, my genes," this adoptee said. That's an important point. Who could argue with this?

Another one wrote and said, "I am sick and tired of this paternalistic, chauvinistic, 'we know what's best for you' attitude of certain agencies." We can understand that feeling with some of the comments we've heard by various agencies and even individuals from this House.

One excellent quote: "Adoption loss is the only trauma in the world where the victims are expected by the whole of society to be grateful." How impressive is that? Isn't that true? You should be happy you were adopted and had a better life. You should be happy someone was prepared to take your child because you couldn't deal with that child—extremely paternalistic in thinking.

One woman wrote and said, "I am not in this quest so disillusioned that I have expectations of finding a whole new family, what I do want out of this is to find out who my parents are and the circumstances behind their choice. Good or bad, the answers should be mine to have." This is about choice and information.

"I have had to grow up having no information about my biological parents or my heritage. Because my parents lied to both my sister and I, we found out that we were adopted only when we tried to get birth certificates for ourselves. Can you imagine standing in an office at Queen's Park and being told that you were adopted and that your birth was never registered?" This was an experience of people here. She said, "In my sister's case, she drove home," after that experience "a distance of 400 miles, in a fog," and all she could think of was, "My whole life is a lie."

1900

Another wrote, "It has never ceased to amaze me how many non-adoptees formulate their own opinions about adoption while completely ignoring the first-hand experiences of adoptees." And that's true. How many of us have to be involved in judgment of these other people? I

think we've got to stop that. "If you have not been adopted, you will never know the emptiness that comes from not knowing your own family history. Translated for the non-adoptee, that means not knowing yourself." This woman wrote about how she discovered her roots. In fact, her roots came from "1665 on the heels of Champlain" in Canada. It was a wonderful story.

One wrote and said, "I have always been artistic, and naturally musically inclined and wonder where I got this from, and if it runs in the family." I have "medical questions, history." He was made aware of his adoption at a very young age, at four years old, and yet could never get that information about his family.

Another: "I have never known the connection that comes with families that are blood-related other than my own kids. My brother and sister are adopted and have met their birth parents." I want this bill—"not for myself but for others after me to not be denied that opportunity to connect where they come from."

One says, "It is extremely important both physiologically and physically to have a working knowledge of one's past. For many years I have wondered where I came from, who I looked like and why I am who I am. The nature versus nurture debate still rages throughout society."

The list is indeed long of those who have written. "Adult adoptees need to be regarded as persons with equal rights to their own history, not objects of inferior victim status, paying the price for a decision that was made by another."

I think many of us are going to hear—perhaps tonight, perhaps in the next week—about this promise of confidentiality, and we have to meet this head-on, because that may have happened. I can tell you that there was not a document that was signed that promised confidentiality—there simply was not. It was not the law; it wasn't on the form. But the nun at the convent in that time indeed promised mothers that they would reconnect in many cases. It was on that basis that the young mother made that decision in that year, because she was told that she would have access. She swears today that if she knew she wasn't going to have access, she wouldn't have done it. She would have faced the struggle. They have written to us in droves to suggest this.

"You're always saying these mothers were promised confidentiality and secrecy. How can you honestly say that when in fact prior to 1970, the full birth last name was on the adoption order given to the adopting parents?" I think that's an important point.

I have to share with you something of interest. In 1995, here in Ontario, in the Ministry of Community and Social Services, there was a policy change—in 1995. That policy change was around the release of a certified copy of the adoption order. If people knew to call our ministry and ask for the adoption order, the actual court document, they were given it. They were given the court order. But most people wouldn't have known to ask for that. I don't know why that changed in 1995, but what



they did essentially was they opened up adoption. They handed over information.

Do you know that since 1995 when they made this policy change, there has not been a single complaint to the Ombudsman, not a single complaint to human rights, not a single complaint to the privacy commissioner, not a single complaint to the community and social service department or to the Premier's office or to opposition members, not a single complaint since 1995 when that policy was changed? I don't know why the privacy commissioner didn't know about this, because this has been studied to death in this House and we have talked about this bill for the 10 years that I have been here—three bills before this Legislature, supported almost unanimously, in 10 years.

I have to suggest to you, it's time. In the time that they received the adoption order, it contained the names of the adoptive parents, the child's birth name and the child's adoptive names. So please let's not suggest for a minute that there isn't one of us in this House who hasn't been a party to this for a long time already, and the sky didn't fall.

People want information, and we have to protect those who feel they'll come to harm from getting that information. We have to do what's right and we have to do it wisely in a balanced fashion, and I believe that is what we're doing. We have taken the time to amend a bill from its first introduction to move items that would have been in regulation anyway, to prove to the naysayers that this is where we're going.

I will sit and listen carefully to people who will continue to say the sky is going to fall. But I am telling you that the best indicator of future behaviour is past behaviour: not a single breach of no-contact anywhere in jurisdictions where it is used. In fact, we in Ontario have had open adoption records, if you knew to ask for the order, since 1995 and not a single complaint. This is a community who knows more about the issue of privacy than any that I have ever met. I hope that every member of this House will move forward and support this bill when it finally comes to a vote.

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I'm a civil engineer by training, and I think the reason I went into that profession was that I like the fact that two plus two equals four, and it's not nearly four, it's not approximately four: it's four. When we get into bills as emotional as this, it is somewhat difficult for me to analyze the entire picture. I have put a great deal of thought into this bill over the years. Although I'm an engineer by training, what I do bring to this debate, I hope, is some of my experience. In 1978, I got on the CAS board of directors and was there for over 25 years, chairing some of those years. I am an adoptive parent, and I was president of the Adoptive Parents Association at one time. My family and I continue to foster.

One of the most interesting things that happened to me shortly after I got on to the CAS board was an individual came who was a crown ward and was going to university and asked the agency to contribute some money to help

her go to school. I thought, "Well, everybody else has family to lean on. They can lean on their families." Then I realized they don't have family. For all intents and purposes, they were it. They had no contact, no other knowledge. They had not been adopted, but they had been removed from their parents and had no knowledge of them. I realized that we had taken this particular individual and had completely isolated her from what every other person in this province has as a support network and to rely on.

I have no doubt in my mind, and I have had individuals tell me whom I have no reason to doubt, that they were promised at the time they gave up their child that their name would never be revealed. I believe that happened. It was not a government policy that made that happen; it was not a CAS policy that made that happen. Someone who clearly did not have the authority to make that commitment, made that commitment. But, at the same time, I have talked to a considerable number of birth mothers who said they were promised that when their child turned 18, when the child turned 16 or whatever, that contact would be re-established. Again, there was no government policy; there was no CAS policy. Individuals made statements that they believed honestly were in the best interests of the birth mother and the child at that time, but there was no legally binding authority behind that. I would suggest that there was, in fact, no thought of the ramifications, the implications of those statements.

When we were involved in our first adoption, we were rather surprised with this part of the process: We were given papers to fill out that, in fact, were the birth registry from the hospital, and we completed a page that made it look as if I was the birth father and my wife was the birth mother. We hadn't anticipated that, and we hadn't asked for it. Quite frankly, it struck me as a little bit fraudulent. I thought, "This is not right. We're the parents, but we're not the birth parents." We didn't ask to never have contact with the birth mother. It was assumed that we wouldn't want to. That was the thought in 1976. I was very uncomfortable with that at that time. But then I moved on and I thought, "I've got to try to put myself in the place of the adoptee."

We have a group of individuals in this province who do not enjoy full citizenship. If we do not pass this bill, we're saying—in fact, to say it to one would be too many, but we're going to say to thousands, "You're not entitled to your information about yourself." Think of that, that we would isolate a group of individuals and deny them access to their information. It is fundamentally wrong.

#### 1910

But it's hard. I'm not adopted; I'm trying to make my decision as I go through my thought process based on information given to me. But for all of us, try to imagine if we were banned from contact with siblings, with aunts and uncles, with our very roots. There's a Web page that shows individuals who died in the sinking of the Titanic. One of the photographs on it is of an individual with the



last name of Parsons. I don't know if we're related, but he had the same receding hairline as I did and he was about as ugly as I am. I'm sorry that I say that about him, but I didn't get where I did on good looks. I know that. I have not a lot of doubt that there's some connection, and I found that fascinating. I just found it fascinating that I had a relative perhaps involved in that, but I had to know my last name to find that connection.

I find it absolutely totally unacceptable that we're prepared to say to a group of individuals, "You don't have access to your information." I appreciate the privacy commissioner's stance that an individual's information can't be given out, but I would suggest that there should be equal energies put into the fact that all individuals are entitled to their information. I strongly and passionately believe that people are entitled to their information. I think our role in this Legislature is to ensure that there is equity in Ontario for that.

For the birth parents who are not comfortable with having their child show up at the door—when I say child, the child may be 40, 50 or 60 years old; they're still their children—who say, "What if my child comes to the door? This bill will make that happen," it's actually quite the opposite, folks. This bill decreases the chance of that happening. In the age we live in, with computers, the access to information we have and the paper trail that we as individuals leave, it's not a really tough job for someone who wanted to go about tracing their roots. What this bill does is provide some order to it. It provides some structure. It provides a mechanism that I think is the ideal approach in that it says to the birth parent, "You don't have to have contact with someone if you don't want to," but it says to the adoptee, "My gosh, you have the right to know who you are and where you are from."

I do not think this bill takes and throws it open and we'll have hundreds or thousands appearing at doors. I don't believe that at all. Experience in other countries has shown us that doesn't happen, because for the first time, this provides some mechanism if a birth mother wishes that not happen. No, this bill makes the situation a thousand times better than it was, not worse.

This bill provides protection for cases where a child was taken into care because of abuse and there should not be the sharing of information. The regulations will provide the details on that, and I have every confidence that the regulations will do it in a way that will be sympathetic and responsive to how birth parents want to do it. There is a protection for those cases, and they're going to be exceptions.

Adoptees are going to find things that we who are not adoptees may say, "You don't want to know that." I would suggest that they're going to find exactly the same things as people who aren't adopted are going to find in their families. Not all families are ideal, but I believe that individuals are entitled to that information and to make their decision about what they want to do based on that information. It is extremely paternalistic: The approach now is that we know what's best for you and you shouldn't have this information. I believe people are

entitled to that, and I believe that if you give people the right information, they will make the right decision. This bill empowers individuals who have been adopted to make the decisions that they and only they should make.

I'm an adoptive parent. Am I worried that there will be a day that our children may choose to leave us and return to the birth mother? No, I'm not. I've changed the diapers, I've sat up with the kids sick, and I've had the great times with them. I will always be their father and my wife will always be their mother. There is a birth mother and there is a birth father somewhere, but we're a family. The definition of "family" sometimes changes over the years. But if our children were to choose to have contact, then we'd help, because that's part of them and that's part of where they came from. We will probably be stronger people and a stronger family because of that.

I will add that in our involvement as adoptive parents and foster parents, I don't know of nightmare stories where gathering the information resulted in families coming apart. Not one do I know of, and I have been involved in the system for quite some time.

Nobody likes change. For people who have adopted and people who were adopted and people who gave birth, this represents change. I believe this bill is ahead of the rest of the world, but the vast majority of what is in this bill has been in regulation and in law in other jurisdictions and has worked. There has not been a slew of people showing up violating the no-contact—quite the opposite. I'm not aware of there having been a charge for it anywhere in the world.

I ask for your support. This is a bill that I believe is the best approach possible to granting each and every individual in this province full citizenship. They are entitled to know their information. I cannot support that more. I ask for your support on a bill that I think will do a great deal of good for us as a province, and a great deal of good for individuals in this province. Please support it. It is far too good a bill to not pass.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):**

In my opinion, Bill 183 is a violation of section 15 of the charter. It is a violation of the privacy right. Privacy is the right to choose whether information about you gets disclosed or not, not just to the world but to anyone other than yourself. The Liberal government has taken away, under Bill 183, our privacy rights. A person's information will be disclosed, and the only protection of privacy is that they request a no-contact order. The Liberal government has no justification for the violation of section 15 of the charter.

Minister Papatello has not made the Liberal government's case tonight for Bill 183's violation of section 15 of the charter. Instead, Minister Papatello criticizes the privacy commissioner for doing her job by speaking for those women who could not come forward to speak for themselves.

Minister, Bill 183's retroactive effect is legally and morally wrong; it can't be justified, and you know it. You haven't made any arguments here tonight other than,



"They have a right to information." That's all you're saying, but you don't want to deal with the charter. Clayton Ruby spoke in front of the legislative committee and basically told you what the violation would be. They asked for an explanation as to what is your justification to infringe on section 15 of the charter. I ask the minister, when she gets back up here tonight, to explain what is the government's justification for violating the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I'd like to know what your case is going to be, because you know you're going to be legally challenged. You're going to be legally challenged because you're violating the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and you know that.

Here tonight, all we hear about is, "It will grant everyone fuller citizenship rights." What about the citizenship rights under the charter that has been enshrined under section 15? I ask Mr Parsons, what about those people's citizenship rights?

Those are all my comments.

1920

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I want to first of all say that I, as a New Democrat, am very proud and pleased to be able to say that I support this bill 100%. The reason I support this bill is because—I think it was alluded to by the minister—it has come before this Legislature on many occasions over the years, every time brought by the member from Toronto–Danforth. This bill is the result of the hard work of the member from Toronto–Danforth and the people who are sitting in the gallery with us tonight. It's their dedication, it's their determination and it's their drive over the years that have gotten us to third reading of what is now Bill 183.

I want to say publicly and loudly, thank you, Marilyn Churley, as a birth mother who has been reunited with your son, who was adopted when you were a young woman making those decisions and choices. Thank you all for being here, adoptive parents, people who have been dealing with this issue from a very personal perspective, from, in some ways, maybe a painful perspective, but a perspective that has always been in the interests of making sure that people have the ability to know their history, to understand the implications of the things that have happened in their lives and in the lives of their birth parents—not for negative reasons, but for reasons that are positive, for reasons that are forward-thinking, and not for reasons that some would have us think in the course of this debate, because I put all of those negative assertions aside.

I think this is the right way to go. It has been the right way to go for a very long time in this province. As a New Democrat, I want to close by once again thanking Marilyn Churley and those wonderful people in the gallery who have worked so hard to get us to where we are tonight.

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** I had the privilege of serving on the committee that heard the delegations on Bill 183. I have to tell you, I have nowhere personally to process this issue. I know who my parents are, I know who my grandparents are, and my

children know who their family is. So this, for me, has been a very educative process and it has been an intellectual process. I've had to process intellectually something that is extremely emotional. That's what I heard when people came before the committee; it's an extremely emotional, divisive issue.

It concerns me that the interests of as many people as possible are protected, and in the way this legislation was written and has been amended, I believe that is the case. We're protecting the interests of people who want and need their information. We're protecting the interests of people who believe that harm will come to them if their information is disclosed. We're protecting the interests of people who don't want contact. It's very compelling to me that in the jurisdictions where there's been a no-contact veto, that has not been violated.

This is not an easy issue. That's why I believe it has taken so long for legislators to deal with it. I believe this legislation puts a framework around this issue, and as I say, it protects the greatest number of people possible. That doesn't mean that there won't be people who are upset that it will pass, it's true, but I believe that in the long term, the fact that people will be able to have information—it's interesting that the member for Bradford—

**Mr. Tascona:** Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford.

**Ms. Wynne:** The member for Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford talked about other people's information. Does information about who I am belong to me, or does it belong to somebody else? I'm not a constitutional lawyer, but I think that will be an interesting discussion. Whose information is it? It's mine if I need it.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to join in the debate and add some comments to the comments of the minister and the member from Prince Edward–Hastings on Bill 183.

I'm in favour of more disclosure of adoption records. I voted in favour of Bill 183 on second reading. My sister Mary was adopted. Her two sons were adopted, although just this last week, after adopting two boys, she gave birth to her first child at age 41—and shared a room with Liz Sandals's daughter, I might add. It was Liz Sandals who came across the floor to let me know that my sister was giving birth last week. That was a bit of a surprise to me.

That aside, I do have concerns about those who agreed to adoption under certain rules and the rules are now being changed. I note that the Queen's faculty of law, in coming before the committee, stated that "it is thought to be fundamentally unjust for changes to the law to have retroactive effect. For example, according to the legal philosopher Lon Fuller, one of the eight principles of proper law-making is the prospective, and not retrospective, nature of the rules created. The rationale for this principle is that citizens should be able to govern their affairs in accordance with the rules of the day."

I am concerned about those people who played by one set of rules and now we're changing the rules on them. I would like to see a disclosure veto. In the case of other provinces—I believe there's at least three—that have a



disclosure veto, very few people actually take advantage of that disclosure veto. In British Columbia, only five disclosure vetoes a year are filed. For me to support this bill—it would be a very easy decision if there was a disclosure veto incorporated into it.

**The Acting Speaker:** One of the government members has two minutes to reply.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I appreciate the opportunity to give you some summary remarks, and that is simply that this is an issue of social policy. It is very difficult to stand and listen to people say “right” or “wrong.” You can’t do that with social policy, because it’s a matter of what decade you are in during that discussion.

I have no doubt that in 1927 it was seen as entirely appropriate to wrench babies from mothers who had no wish to give up their baby for adoption. We’ve heard lots of those stories. Likewise, in the 1930s or the 1940s it was entirely appropriate that these mothers who wanted to give their babies away, never to be seen again—what they heard at the time was that they were promised confidentiality.

Let me tell you about the retroactivity of this bill. There would be no point to the bill if it weren’t retroactive, first of all. Second, the law of the day did not ensure confidentiality. There was nothing in the law that gave people this right. On the issue of privacy and information, can we please all recognize that there are two sides to this argument? Every time information is denied to one, someone else in that relationship maintains their right to privacy, and that has always been the struggle in this debate.

But finally, we’re saying we have to do this safely and wisely and with balance. We have suggested tonight what we’ve done in the bill since its first introduction and the subsequent interventions and even my own discussions with the Leader of the Opposition, to say, “If you want to see what’s going to happen in regulations, I’ll do better than that. We’ll put it in the bill.” So we amended the bill, but that wasn’t enough for some. It will never be enough for some, and I acknowledge that. I am prepared to acknowledge that I have a difference of opinion on this matter from some individuals in this House and some members of the public. But I also believe we’re moving forward with social policy in the right way, to respect our times and to respect that group of people who have been denied rights for a long time. I must say, we couldn’t possibly be threatened by the potential of litigation, or governments would be frozen forever.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** I join this debate with some history. At the outset, I would like to say to my colleague Mr. Parsons, from Prince Edward–Lennox—

**Mr. Parsons:** Hastings.

**Mr. Sterling:** Prince Edward–Hastings? I’m sorry. I don’t know what it is after the next election. At any rate, I want to congratulate him on how he has carried himself through this issue. You have done it with honour, sir. You have answered questions honestly in committee.

You have told us when you don’t know the answer to a particular question. You have referred to staff of the ministry when appropriate, and they have told us when they didn’t know. Unfortunately, they didn’t know too often, in terms of some of the provisions of this bill.

I want to say to you that I also respect your personal involvement in this issue, both as an adoptive parent and also as a foster parent. I appreciate, as a long-standing politician of this Legislature and representing another eastern Ontario community, the work of so many of our foster parents across eastern Ontario and the sacrifice that you and your wife have made on behalf of many children. It’s with that background that I listened very carefully to each and every comment that you made in committee.

**1930**

I would like to talk a little about the history of this particular issue. This issue, as you know, was brought forward by the member from Toronto–Danforth, Ms. Churley, on a number of occasions as a private member’s bill. I believe it started early in the 1990s, though it may have been in the late 1980s. But in the early 1990s, as you may recall, the New Democratic Party—no, it must have been in the late 1980s, because the member opposite was also a minister during that period. I want to make the point that, notwithstanding that this issue has been very important to the New Democratic Party, during the time from 1990 to 1995 when that party had the reins of power and a substantial majority in this Legislature, this bill was not brought forward as a government bill.

For us to say that this particular topic has been in front of the Legislature is misleading in some ways to the public, because we all know that the strength of a private member’s bill is far less than a government bill. Members of the public really do not believe—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Sterling:** Members of the public do not believe that a major policy shift will be made by the contents of a private member’s bill. Having been a government minister as I have been, all members of the Legislature realize that before a minister brings forward a particular policy proposal, a piece of legislation, it is necessary to consult widely with the community, the people involved with the particular issue. It’s important that those people have their input before the legislation hits the floor.

That’s the whole context of how and why a government bill is very much different from a private member’s bill. We can introduce as many private members’ bills as we want; there’s no requirement on us to consult widely with all sides of the issue, to talk to people who are in favour of our proposal and against our policy proposal. There is no requirement for that to occur in the process.

Notwithstanding that I congratulate the member for Toronto–Danforth for her tenacity and her focus on this issue, and I understand her personal involvement in this issue, the whole idea that this issue has been discussed and has gone through the legislative process prior to this bill being introduced is somewhat of a fallacy.

*Interjection.*



**Mr. Sterling:** I also want to talk about—if I'm not continually interrupted by the member from Toronto—Danforth, Mr. Speaker—the process we've gone through with regard to this bill. When this bill was introduced, the minister read a statement in the Legislature whereby she inferred that the privacy commissioner was endorsing this particular piece of—

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** No, I didn't.

**Mr. Sterling:** Well, if you didn't—I invite the public and I invite you to read your statement in a response to me. Read your statement with regard to Ms. Cavoukian in terms of this.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Sterling:** If you read the statement of the minister on the introduction of this bill, you would swear that the privacy commissioner was endorsing this piece of legislation.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Sterling:** Well, perhaps one of my colleagues would get the Hansard in response to this particular statement and read it. We have it right here. I don't have my glasses.

**The Acting Speaker:** Excuse me; I'm just going to interrupt for one second. The important thing is that there is decorum in the House at all times and, when a member has the floor, that he or she is given the opportunity to present their comments without interruption. I would ask all members to respect that during the debate this evening.

I return again to the member for Lanark—Carleton.

**Mr. Sterling:** Here's what the minister said upon the introduction of this bill: "One woman, an officer of this Legislature—our privacy commissioner, Ann Cavoukian—was extraordinarily helpful in the development of this bill. The back and forth between our offices has led to a much better proposed bill. I thank her for her interventions, and I thank her for her thoughtfulness."

Since that date, and when Ann Cavoukian came out the next day saying she was diametrically opposed to the bill as it stood and insisted on a disclosure veto, the minister has attacked the privacy commissioner. She has attacked her in saying that she doesn't have jurisdiction and she shouldn't be saying anything about this privacy matter.

I ask the public, if you read that particular statement and heard that statement in this Legislature, would you not draw the conclusion that Ann Cavoukian, the privacy commissioner, was in favour of what the minister was doing on that day? Those are the minister's words in this Legislature, and I ask her to look up what she said at that particular time.

On the one hand, we have gone through a process which I think has in some ways improved the legislation. Our party realizes and I realize that I'm not on the side of politics with regard to this issue. There are very few people who will go into the depth of this legislation. Generally, my colleagues feel there should be more disclosure, but it's how to balance the rights of those people who have been promised that their records will be sealed

forever with those who want to open those records. We don't feel that this government has found the right balance. We believe that Alberta, BC and Newfoundland have found the right solution.

I want to, in terms of the process, also talk about the original bill that was introduced here on March 29 and the bill that is in front of us in the Legislature today. I would ask any member of the public to have a look at the written version of the amended bill that we have back here in the Legislature. There's barely a section that has not been amended. About 70% or 80% of the sections have been amended. Some of those sections have been amended because of our involvement in the debate and the ability of Mr. Parsons to listen to the debate and say to his staff, "We have to fix this. We have to fix this piece of legislation, because the way it is now drafted will not work."

Quite frankly, I don't think the bill as amended is going to stand the test of time. My colleague from Barrie has indicated something about a charter challenge. I'm not even sure it's going to have to go to that level in order for the government to be forced to come back to this Legislature to revamp the bill. Essentially, what happened is that as the arguments were brought forward—and I don't think it was particularly because I or any other person debating this bill brought them forward, but I think it was more important that the privacy commissioner entered the debate. That's when the newspapers and the public started to say, "Hey, there may be a problem here." As a consequence, the government was forced to listen. In our parliamentary process, unfortunately, the opposition doesn't have much clout. It's just the nature of the beast, the nature of the institution. But once people outside of this institution start to chirp up, start to talk about a policy issue, then the government of the day is forced to listen.

As a consequence, we started to amend the bill. The policy started to change as we were in the process of debating the bill. The result is a bit of a dog's breakfast. The minister and the parliamentary assistant talk about making regulations—which maybe they'll come back to the Legislature to talk about and put into the legislation—regarding some of the very key parts of this piece of legislation. I talk particularly about the tribunal, which was an afterthought after this bill was introduced on March 29. It was an afterthought that came forward because I don't think the government did the kinds of consultations I talked about. They didn't talk to the other side of the community. They're hard to find, because there's not a large, organized group of people interested in keeping their confidentiality. There's not an organization around these people. So all the stories with regard to the fact that things are wonderful in New South Wales—they did a five-year study and nobody came forward. Well, guess what? Why don't people come forward? Because they don't want to be identified. It's a deep, dark secret that they don't want out in the world, so they don't want to come forward.



**1940**

I've said that the politics are against us with regard to this. Our party and I am standing up for a significant minority. As the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka said, we're talking about 3% to 5% of the people who went into a contract with the government whatever number of years ago. The minister tried to portray these contracts as being ancient. Well, I've got evidence, and I'll read it later, that one person was promised this a year ago. A year ago, an adoptive parent was promised that on the adoption of their child, the records would be sealed. That wasn't 50 or 60 years ago; that was a year ago. We have to respect what our government institutions, our government workers, our laws, our regulations, our policies and our sealed records conveyed to the public over the last 50 or 60 years.

I have not stood in this Legislature only this time respecting a minority view or a view which was very unpopular with the public. I go back to 1986, when I was the only member of this Legislature to vote against the extension of separate school funding: 117 to 1 in this Legislature. I predicted exactly what would happen, which is happening now, that is, that many people in our multicultural community are demanding the same right as the majority religion in the province of Ontario. How do you deal with that?

Notwithstanding that, you have to have logic and consideration of the institutions that we belong to in how you make law. This is such an abrogation of the principles on which we founded this institution, the principles on which we stand in this Legislature. Our duty, the government's duty, is to say to the people, "Here is the law today. Make your decision on the law today and follow the law, be a good citizen, and in the future you will be protected." A promise is made, an obligation is taken, and into the future that will hold up.

I say to my friend Mr. Parsons, I am a civil engineer and follow logic to some degree—as some people would say, it's sometimes no and sometimes yes—but I also studied law and was the Attorney General of this province for a period of time. I think I do understand the tenets and the institutions of our legal system. I am sorry that this issue could not have been resolved in a logical and reasonable way. The logical and reasonable way was to follow the example of the other three provinces and allow a disclosure veto. The beauty of the disclosure veto is, number one, that there is a very small take-up. You would get only those people who thought they were going to be greatly aggrieved by the disclosure of their information. As the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka has said, I think there were five people who registered a disclosure veto last year, so that somewhere around 3% to 5% of the total records would remain sealed.

By not giving that disclosure veto as a choice to people who have been promised the security of their personal information, you have to create another process. What we have seen here is the government struggling with this as we've been going through the legislative process since March 29. In the committee, they came up all of a sudden

with the idea of a tribunal. So the bill we're debating today, which was amended substantially in committee—in third reading debate, you're not supposed to be talking about the general bill but about the amended sections. Well, with this bill, we can talk about any section because they were virtually all amended. The bill has been rewritten, and it has been rewritten not only once, but twice, three times.

In fact, at our last meeting in September, there were major amendments made to the legislation once again. Do you know why? Because the government discovered that they had done away with the registrar that has control over the records at this present time. They did away with that body immediately on the passage of this bill. That would have meant that between the time of doing away with the old system of disclosure—that is, all those people who have their applications in for disclosure now—and the implementation of the new bill, there wouldn't have been any disclosures because there wouldn't have been any registrar. The government talks about 18 months between those two periods of time. So we had to go through the bill in the second or third week of September, fully six months after the minister introduced this bill, to change the section to keep the registrar's office open for that period. That's how badly this bill was thought out. It's a bit scary. This piece of legislation, as amended, is a bit scary, because it wasn't the result of a clear policy intention, a clear policy proposal.

The government did listen to some amendments—I mean, they listened to our arguments. They brought forward the amendments themselves. There were some ridiculously bad things with regard to the original bill. One section said no one could open a sealed record. Then we asked the ministry staff, why keep the sealed record at all? Why not destroy the record if no one can open a sealed record? They said, "That's not what we mean. We don't mean that no one can open a sealed record." Yet there was a section in the act that actually said that. The ministry came in about two weeks later, with their tail between their legs, and amended that section. So we have what I would say is a bill sort of formulated on the go.

There is a real question as to what's going to happen as we do go forward. Number one is that there are some major parts of the bill that weren't outlined. Perhaps the most important one is how this tribunal is set up and how it is going to work. The parliamentary assistant was honest with us. He said, "I don't know. I don't know how this is going to work." I said, "Is it going to be one person? Are there going to be three people?" He did tell me there is no appeal from it. I assume it is going to be behind closed doors, because it's kind of a secret situation.

**1950**

But what happens if the person walks through the door and there's only one person on the tribunal? There's no appeal from it. You don't know what the biases of the person may or may not be with regard to this issue, and they may or may not grant a person, a woman who had been raped, continued veto of the disclosure. They may or may not grant her that, and she can't go anywhere else,



because there's no one in the room keeping a record. There's no appeal, as there is in any other court process.

The Statutory Powers Procedure Act is done away with specifically in the act, so that a woman who has gone through a traumatic experience, who was raped and who asked that her records never be disclosed—one person may be sitting in there who says, "I don't believe you. The records are open." That's what can happen under this particular act. The government's answer to that is, "We'll tell you later how this tribunal is going to function."

Mr. Speaker, you represent some small towns. We don't know whether this tribunal is going to go into small towns. I presume that if they go into a small town, everybody in town will know what's happening there. If a particular individual goes into the tribunal, it will be very clearly identified as to what's happening. So it's a very, very difficult process which they've set up under this bill, on the fly.

This is legislation on the fly. This is a bad piece of legislation now. In fact, dare I say it, the original piece of legislation is probably better than the amended bill. The amended bill reflects more of what we want in terms of protecting these people with regard to their right to privacy of their very personal information, but it doesn't all fit together, and the government hasn't really figured it out yet.

I've heard people and members of this Legislature before talk about how there's going to be a constitutional hearing and the bill will be struck down etc. Well, I do know that the courts are very reluctant to involve themselves with regard to legislative matters. I know that the courts are in some ways loath to involve themselves in issues that they would perceive as political in nature, but the problem with this one is that it isn't only Norm Sterling or the official opposition that are trying to protect the rights of this very small minority; it's the privacy commissioner of Ontario; it's every privacy commissioner of every province in Canada; it's the federal privacy commissioner. It's virtually everyone who understands what privacy law is about and what is the right balance.

I want to talk a little bit back into the process. On September 15, I asked for the names of the people the ministry staff had contacted with regard to the no-contact veto, because I had asked the question in committee as to how this no-contact veto had worked in New South Wales, Australia, which the minister repeatedly said that we should look to as being the ideal situation forever. The staff came back with an astonishing response, that although the New South Wales legislation has been in place for 15 years—it came into effect in 1990—there hasn't been one prosecution under the act.

I think I said that in this Legislature on second reading. I said, "Who on earth believes that a natural mother is going to undertake a prosecution against her natural child when in fact she doesn't want contact?" The last thing she wants in the world is to engage in litigation with somebody she doesn't want to be involved with—or vice versa: an adoptee who doesn't want to be involved

with the natural mother. So this whole concept of a no-contact veto and there being a penalty of up to \$50,000 is totally bogus and doesn't have any effect on what goes on.

Why I wanted to get the phone number on September 15, which I was promised would be delivered to the committee by September 27, was that I wanted to phone Australia to ask them about the anecdotal cases they had talked about in committee. The staff said that notwithstanding that there weren't any no-contact prosecutions, there were people who had contacted the people who were involved in the ministry and in the disclosure apparatus who were unsatisfied, who had some great concerns. I wanted to phone those people in Australia to find out a little bit more about that story. So I asked the question in the House yesterday, where was the committee's response? I didn't just leave it until yesterday. I asked the committee clerk on three separate occasions since September 22, has the response come back as to whom I talk to in Australia? No answer. I got back to my office yesterday afternoon after question period, and guess what was waiting in the fax box? A letter from the minister signed the day before.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** That's the committee's job.

**Mr. Sterling:** Your staff made the commitment and they didn't deliver. You're responsible for your staff, Madam Minister.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** Google them, for God's sake.

**Mr. Sterling:** Google them?

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** That's how I found them.

**The Acting Speaker:** I would ask the House to come to order. The member for Lanark—Carleton has the floor.

**Mr. Sterling:** The minister is sensitive. She didn't live up to a commitment, she hasn't lived up to this process, and so now she is in a defensive position. I understand her perceived outrage, which she often exhibits in this Legislature. This isn't anything new to any of us who have been in this Legislature. My disdain for such interventions is—anyway.

We believe very much in the right to privacy in this party. We don't believe that this province should have the least sensitive privacy laws in all of Canada. This government is displaying that here now.

We tried through the process, and Mr. Parsons has acted honourably. The staff have acted honourably in terms of what they have done. They didn't live up to this last commitment that I talked about. So I come to this debate, with regard to my knowledge about what happened in Australia—I didn't expect to have this debate until I'd had some time to contact the people in Australia and ask them about their experience. Because the minister has used the Australian experience as her basis for all of this, I think the legislative process should allow the opposition the right to talk to the same people her staff talked to, but they have a different idea of governing than we do. I would not have acted like this as a minister, and I've been minister of several portfolios, as you know.

I've talked about the process. I've talked a little bit about the degrading process that we're going to put these



people through to retain their privacy. I just don't understand how you can say to children who have been abused or to women who have been raped—I don't see how you can say to these people, "You've got to appear in front of a tribunal to protect your right." My colleague Mr. Jackson tried to bring forward an amendment in committee to automatically give these people a unilateral right of disclosure. Instead, you've got to go in front of somebody and say, "Please, sir, can I retain my privacy? Can I retain my privacy now and into the future? Can I do that?"

2000

I have a great deal of problem with this process, because it hasn't been thought through. The parliamentary assistant was clear with us when we asked him, "Have you thought through how this is going to work? Is it going to work by mail? Do you have to appear in person? Can you do it by videoconferencing?" "I don't know. I don't know. We're going to do it by regulation." Well, this is a key part of this legislation, and I think members of the Legislature should decide upon how this process is going to go. Instead, Ms. Pupatello and her cabinet ministers—

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** It's "Minister" to you, Norm. Don't be so sexist in here; use my proper title.

**Mr. Sterling:** There's the old sexist card. Go ahead. Minister Pupatello—

**The Acting Speaker:** I'll ask the House one more time to come to order, please. The member for Lanark—Carleton has the floor.

**Mr. Sterling:** The ministers will make these decisions behind closed doors, and we know where the bias is in terms of what kind of decisions they will make. We don't know who they're going to appoint to these particular roles as tribunals. We don't know whether they're going to be independently appointed. We don't know whether they're going to be people from the advocacy group sitting in the lobby here today. We don't know who they're going to be.

Somebody going in front of this tribunal has no idea how the process is going forward. I think that's where this whole bill may fail. This whole bill may fail on the basis of this tribunal and how it's set up and how it isn't subject to the statutory procedures act. I think that will be part of the failing part of the bill, if indeed that happens.

One of the greatest problems I have with it is the retroactivity of the bill and not giving those 3% to 4% of people who want to retain their privacy the right of exercising that privacy. We're not saying that the bill can't be retroactive at all. We are saying that yes, the bill can be retroactive, as long as you give the people who are affected and were promised their privacy the right to exercise a veto.

We know this government had already introduced another bill which dealt with retroactively making law—that was the Adams mine bill—so I'm not totally surprised with regard to this government's abrogation of the institutions or the general rules of law. Notwithstanding that, this will be a very difficult one, and I'm certain it

will be part of the charter argument that will ensue over this bill.

The most frustrating part of this for us is that three other jurisdictions have successfully done this before we did: British Columbia, Alberta and Newfoundland. Basically, they said, "Records are open, but anybody who objects to the records being open can register a disclosure veto." Only 3% to 5% of the people have exercised this particular disclosure veto.

The reason that's attractive is that, first, you're not saying to someone who was promised their privacy a year ago, five years ago, 10 years ago or 30 years ago, "We're taking your right away unilaterally." What you're saying to them is, "We're going to shift the bias on to you to take action." But the more attractive part of it for a government is that it can implement this law almost just like that, whereas the scheme that has been dreamed up under this amended bill is difficult, if not impossible, to implement. So those who are proponents of more disclosure may not get any more disclosure as a result of this legislation because of the fact that they are so adamant about getting 100% rather than 97% without respecting the small minority who want to insist on continuing their privacy with regard to these records.

I guess the other amazing thing is that there are few issues I've debated in this Legislature where every major newspaper in the province of Ontario has said that the government is wrong. Every major newspaper in editorials—the Ottawa Citizen, the Globe and Mail, the Hamilton Spectator; wherever you go, there has been an editorial which has soundly condemned this government for its lack of concern over the privacy issue.

Lastly, I want to say that I'm very proud of my party. I'm very proud of the people who have listened to this debate. I'm proud of people who have written to me from other parties—from the New Democratic Party and from other parties—who have written to me quietly or phoned me and said, "Keep up your work in retaining our rights to make our own determination, as we were promised." I'm very proud of our party and how we have embraced this issue and gone to bat for a small minority of people.

When you're talking about rights, whether it's a right you want for information or a right about somebody else wanting privacy, you have to balance those particular rights. Rights are not pure. A right for me is an obligation to somebody else, or a wrong to somebody else. I think it's the duty of the Legislature to find the right balance.

Lastly, I want to read from some of the over 400 people who have written to the privacy commissioner with regard to this bill and to their concerns over Bill 183.

Number 44—I'm referring to the people as numbers: "I was adopted over 26 years ago by a wonderful family who I love dearly. I found out about adoption records being made public, and I almost died! I can't believe that the government would go out of their way to take away our right to privacy. Now, it seems, that we didn't have a right to have a say in our adoptions, and now we won't have a right to save our families from being hunted down from the very people who sent us away to begin with."



That's from an adoptee. This is about freedom of choice and control over your own information. As the privacy commissioner said to the committee, privacy means control over your own personal information. A non-contact veto doesn't control your privacy. All it does is, it says to one other person, "You can't contact that particular person." It doesn't say to the other person, "You've got this information. You can't share it with anybody." In fact, the non-contact veto, as told to us in committee isn't between all of the family and the person about whom the information is; it's only between the two people. If one person gets that information, they can share it with any other member of the family, and any other member of the family can contact the person who didn't want the information disclosed.

That's the whole farce about this contact veto. The contact veto is an absolute sham and has no effect in terms of providing any protection to the person we're giving up in terms of the privacy they were promised.

Number 153, another adoptee: "I was very happily adopted at birth and have no desire to meet my 'birth parents' and vehemently oppose the passing of Bill 183. I feel it would be a total violation of my privacy to change the rules that were in place at the time of the adoption."

2010

Number 292: "The fact that I may be able to place a 'no-contact' order on the person who receives the disclosure as my 'birth parent' completely misses the point. The issue isn't whether someone will show up at my door purporting to be my parent—then I don't have to speak to him or her. Obviously, if I don't wish to speak to that person, then I won't. The bigger issue is that the government has no right to disclose this information in the first place, as it tries to define who my parents are, against my wishes, and against the truth, and thereby demotes my parents and my family to being a second-class family....

"My final comment is that I am not self-important enough to believe that I am speaking on behalf of all adoptees. I appreciate it is a difficult issue and there are varying views and opinions surrounding it. I am, however, dismayed that [those] who spearheaded this bill, are trying to do just that and speak for all of those involved. Simply because [some birth mothers] who gave a child up for adoption and apparently [have] had a successful reunification, had such an experience, that does not give [them] the right to speak for me."

Number 255, about doing harm to them: "I realize there will be 'no-contact' provisions, but I think we both know that someone so curious as to search for you may not necessarily be restrained by simple 'no-contact' wishes. And, like so many other provisions in our society, I suspect the 'no-contact' provisions will become virtually unenforceable through technicalities, administrative inability of agencies to enforce, insufficient penalties, third party interventions, etc. In any event, the damage may already have been done."

These particular people were talking about inviting unwelcome and unwanted intrusions.

Number 45—this is to the privacy commissioner, where I got this information from: "Please stick to your guns regarding a veto ... some of us wish to remain anonymous. I do not wish to 'be found' by natural family members ... contact veto will not work, requires me to file letters (as opposed to leaving records sealed), and even if they leave me alone, gives them way too much information about me. My parents still live at the same address, are elderly, and do not need to 'fight off' a frantic mother. It's possible that you have be [sic] deluged by mothers searching, but they made their decisions long ago. No one asked me ... now I finally have a say and I say 'no!!!' Thank you for listening."

Number 43: "I do not want my adoption records opened! A veto has worked well in other provinces. My birth family did not want me then and I do not want them to invade my life now! A no-contact order is not enough ... like restraining orders it will not work! I had no say at my birth but I do now, and I say no to Bill 183!!"

Number 156: "As an adult adoptee, I am sympathetic to those who wish to access information about their biological roots. I have no wish, however, to seek this information myself, nor do I wish my information to be provided to strangers. I do not agree that access to such information is a right.... I do not believe that a contact veto will suffice. I have witnessed the zealotry of adoptees and birth mothers and the threat of a fine will not be sufficient to stop unwanted contact being made."

This is about the tribunal, about those wishing to maintain their privacy and having to appear in front of a tribunal.

Number 292: "At this point, if Bill 183 passes, the only way I can prevent the disclosure of such information is to go before a government tribunal and 'beg' for non-disclosure. However, reading the fine print of this 'exemption' clause, it is clear that a non-disclosure exemption will only be granted if the adopted child has been abused or subjected to incest by those who gave birth to it. In my situation, these criteria do not apply. Therefore, if I appeared in front of such a tribunal, my request for non-disclosure would be denied. Forgive me for speaking candidly, but this seems not only backwards; but just plain wrong. Shouldn't the government be protecting my privacy rights instead of requiring me to justify why my private information should not be disclosed?"

Then I go on to birth parents who believe that they were given solid assurances of confidentiality. Many of these people have stated breaches of these promises and rights, and others have characterized the retroactivity of Bill 183 as wrong, unfair and a betrayal of trust.

I'll read number 37: "We birth mothers were promised complete confidentiality upon adoption, they ... assured me that adoption records were sealed with no possibility of them being opened at any time.... I feel that my rights of privacy, which were promised by the government, are being broken, with no consideration given to birth mothers or their feelings. In these cases the law should



not be changed, because society is more accepting now, but should stay with the rules as they were then.”

That’s complaining about retroactivity.

Number 39: “I was informed that the [personal] information would be strictly confidential, and would only be used for providing family health history for the baby, so I gave the information. I do not want any personal information about myself released to anyone. If this bill is passed, it will be an invasion of privacy, and will be a breach of contract.”

Number 272: “I worked as a social worker for 35 years for the children’s aid society ... working with the unmarried mother regarding her decision to relinquish her child. Many had hidden their pregnancy from family, friends, school mates, employers, even the baby’s father.... They asked and were given the assurance that no one would ever find out what had happened unless they chose to tell. Their long-term plan was to rebuild their lives....

“In those days, our word was our bond. This bill, even with its amendment, is a betrayal to the women we promised to protect.”

Number 241: “I for one do not wish any contact whatsoever, and when I am no longer here on this earth, I do not wish any of my family being contacted.... When a person has been taken advantage of at a young age and believes they have done the right thing, this should be left as is. Why after all these years change anything?”

Number 152: “I personally believe that even if there was not a ‘legal’ promise of confidentiality to these individuals, the fact that they came away from the process thinking that their identity would be protected is the important factor.”

According to birth parents, there will be a wide range of harms as a result of exposing them. These would range from emotional trauma, disrupting and destabilizing their personal, professional and family lives and inviting unwelcome and unwanted intrusion, to requiring those who wish to protect their privacy to go through a tribunal process.

Number 31: “I haven’t felt so distressed or isolated since 40 years ago when I was 17 and pregnant.”

I’m only reading one in every dozen.

2020

Number 147: “When I gave up my daughter ... years ago, I was assured that the records were ‘permanently’ sealed. I was only 17 years old, and no one knew that I was pregnant except my mother. I now have a husband, children, in-laws, work associates and many friends who have no idea what I went through all those years ago. My daughter was placed with children’s aid because I wanted her to have the life that I couldn’t give her. My social worker told me to make sure that I was sure of what I was doing, because the records were permanently sealed and that I would never see her again. There was no point in telling anyone else if I was going to give her up for adoption.”

Number 308: “I have spent most of my life trying to forget but living in fear that this information would be

given or leaked out even though I was assured that it wouldn’t. Now the government wants to make this fear a reality.”

Then there were a number of people who wanted to talk about unwelcome and unwanted intrusion. Since I’m running short of time, I’ll skip those eight particular quotes from their letters to the privacy commissioner.

A lot of birth parents cannot speak publicly for fear of being identified, and a number have asked the commissioner to speak on their behalf. That’s why I find it greatly disruptive when the minister says the privacy commissioner has no business talking about this particular issue, that she has no jurisdiction, that she has nothing to say about this. Well, I’ve got to tell you, the public doesn’t believe that.

“[T]hose of us who have concealed pregnancies are powerless to write letters to the editor or speak out at meetings.... I do so appreciate your speaking out for those of us who can’t.”

Number 38: “I can’t voice my anger since I feel I must remain silent about my past. How unfair to all of us who must remain ‘voiceless’ that this will be retroactive. And the laughable ‘no-contact’ notice—who will report this and make a bad situation worse?”

There are also some concerns relating to adoptive parents.

Number 49: “A little over a year ago we adopted a[n] [infant] boy through the children’s aid society.” That’s the one I was talking about in my main speech: It was just a year ago. “It was made clear to us at the time of that adoption that ... the birth parents would have no way of tracing our son since all adoption records would be sealed.”

We’re not talking about archaic promises, as the minister tried to portray this, back in the Middle Ages. We’re talking about what happened last year; last year the promise was made. These promises are probably still being made at this time.

There are some letters here about youth who, at 18 or 19, are too young to make a decision about contact. What this legislation says is that between the ages of 18 and 19, a youth who was adopted has to make the decision about whether he or she is going to go to this tribunal and plead the case as to whether disclosure should be blocked with regard to the records, because of course they have become an adult. There is some concern, number one, about the degree of knowledge of what happened when he or she was abused, and the other part is whether or not these people, at that age, are in a position to make that decision. That’s what these people have written to the privacy commissioner about.

During question period, we talked about the woman who talked about not wanting to relive the trauma of the rape she had undergone in going in front of the tribunal. I don’t understand why this government wants to force a woman who was raped to go in front of a tribunal and relive that rape. Why does she have to go in front of a tribunal and talk about the details of that particular rape in order to protect the privacy that was promised to her? I



don't understand that. All you have to do is follow the legislation in BC, Alberta and Newfoundland, and allow that person to say, "I don't want it done."

Number 167: "I have an adopted daughter who is now [X] years old. She has stated to me that she does not want her birth family to have access to her information. Where is her protection?"

"Even with a 'no-contact' order placed in her file, I do not believe that or the threat of a hefty fine would deter a determined birth family member. I believe they would think that the risk would be worth taking.

"Please protect those who do not wish to be tracked down."

Number 273: "If this bill be passed without at the very least a disclosure veto clause, it will bring tragedy into many families."

I have read a lot of personal testimony into the record today, but let me sum up in the last two minutes I have. The big problem with this legislation is that I don't believe the ministry made an effort to consult with the people on the other side; only through the privacy commissioner has their story been brought forward. They should have gone to the privacy commissioner and asked her to engage in a consultation with regard to these people before bringing this bill forward. This bill is a dog's breakfast. It is a bill that has been subject to the change of the minister's office on a day-to-day basis. We have seen more amendments brought to this bill than there are sections to this bill. There are only four or five sections of the original bill that remain intact.

The bill cannot be implemented without great difficulty and great peril to the people who are going to be subject to this star chamber tribunal. I don't use that term lightly. When you give somebody the outright right to make a decision on this basis without appeal, that is dangerous. It would be so easy for the government to just follow the other provinces. You will get all the privacy commissioners onside, you will get all the editorials onside, you will get us onside and you will only affect a very small minority—a minority, though, that needs protecting and needs to be spoken for in this Legislature, and I'm proud to do so.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I'll be speaking at length in a few minutes. I do want to say that the member has raised some issues that he's raised time and time again, and I want to correct him on a few. I'll have time to do more later.

The NDP government brought forward a private member's bill which was supported by the Premier and the government. It had extensive hearings—many of the people here tonight were involved in those—and came back for third reading and a final vote. A lot of us were left crying there and in our seats that night because Norm Sterling and some others filibustered the bill the last night of the Legislature. But it went out for extensive hearings and was fully supported by the government. One of my private member's bills, brought forward under his government—remember? under the Conservative govern-

ment—went so far as to be sent out for committee hearings, public hearings and clause-by-clause and came very, very close to coming forward for third reading and a final vote, but was stopped at the end of the day.

So it isn't true. At least two of those I think nine private members' bills overall—there were others brought in by a few other people—went fully through the process.

**2030**

This member tried to filibuster the government bill before us today at the committee level and would not let it out of committee for the final reading and a vote during the last session, which is what we and the proponents and the people who are in the audience today came down and did. He held it up. I was there every step of the way. This is his last kick at the can.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Community and Social Services for saying that her government, if elected, would bring forward an adoption bill. They have followed through, and that bill is here before us today. Therefore, as a result of that, I know that the bill will pass, because the majority of the members in this House, as in Ontario, support the bill before us tonight.

**Mr. Parsons:** I want to thank the member for Lanark-Carleton for his kind remarks about me. I did in fact say I didn't know what was in the regulations, but that's part of regulation writing. It would be presumptuous of me to know what's in the regulations, because that's going to be drafted by people who know far more than I do, of whom there are millions in this province.

I do want to talk about some people who weren't talked about in the member's speech.

I want to thank the minister for her commitment to this bill. I believe in this bill and in the leadership the minister has shown to get to it this point.

I also want to talk about a group that we haven't talked about very much this evening, and that's the birth mothers. I've had contact with numbers of them through fostering and through adoption and through dialogue. I have not met a birth mother who did not love her child—not once. I would class birth mothers as heroes, because they did what they believed was in the best interests of their child. Giving up a child is not a natural action, but they are birth mothers who recognized their situation, recognized their child's needs and said, "I'm not able to meet those needs at this point in time," and they made their choice.

As my colleagues know, we lost our son last year. I would give anything, absolutely anything, for 10 seconds with him, but that's not possible. But for birth mothers in this province, that is possible, and the only barrier has been the governments over the ages—the only barrier. So we can't fix my problem, but we can fix the birth mothers' problems with the passage of this bill, and we owe it to them. We owe it to them.

**Mr. Tascona:** I want to thank the MPP from Lanark-Carleton for his comments here tonight. They're well thought out and certainly heartfelt.

Bill 183, from a prospective effect, is totally supportable in this Legislature. That's not even an issue. The



issue is the retroactivity in the law. A retroactive law is fundamentally viewed as unfair by our courts, because the courts support applying the law that was in effect at the time the conduct in question occurred. The courts frown upon applying law that was not in effect at the time the conduct in question arose. Why? Judicial fairness in the application of the law and the social legitimacy of government laws. The rules are not supposed to be changed in the middle of the game. That's what we're here for. We're not here to change the rules to bring things back.

But I will say one thing with respect to what Minister Papatello said earlier tonight about passing legislation and the threat of litigation. I would say this: Bill 183 is a violation of section 15 of the charter and it's a violation of the privacy rights of all citizens of this country. Legislation cannot be made in a vacuum, which she is trying to do. There has to be some respect for the charter. If you're just going to pass legislation and say, "Social basis; it's the right thing to do," with no respect for the charter, no respect for the privacy commissioner, no respect for the opinions out there in the public with respect to what's right, then what are you doing here?

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the member for Hamilton East.

**Ms. Horwath:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to make some comments on the speech by the member from Lanark–Carleton. Although it had many things I didn't agree with, he always brings some informed points to the debate, and I certainly respect him for that.

I have some disagreements about how this is going to unfold once it becomes law in the province of Ontario. What I expect will happen is that there will be measured, appropriate, decent behaviour by all parties who are going to be affected by this legislation, so I don't buy into some of the fearmongering, some of the "sky is falling" sentiments being brought forward in regard to Bill 183.

I represent an urban area, not a rural area, and I served on a municipal council, but many of my colleagues are from what we would consider to be more rural or small-town perspectives. I was a little disturbed to hear an expectation, almost what I would consider to be a stereotypical type of expectation, that people in small communities will be hiding behind their drapes and hawking down the people that might be going to the hearings or to a tribunal to try to get their records kept private. That disturbed me a great deal. Certainly, if I were living in rural Ontario, in a small town in Ontario, I wouldn't want to be characterized as someone who had nothing to do but spy on their neighbours in order to create small-town gossip around who may or may not be attending a tribunal to maybe, or maybe not, have records maintained privately. That concerns me, and I'm worried about that kind of debate.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time for questions and comments. I return to the member for Lanark–Carleton.

**Mr. Sterling:** I want to make it clear that there was never a government bill brought forward before this one on this subject, notwithstanding what the member from Toronto–Danforth raised. It wasn't an NDP government bill; it was a private bill on her part. Her government didn't see fit to bring forward that bill.

In fact, during our time in government, there was an opportunity to pass her private member's bill, but the NDP saw another issue as a higher priority than her bill at that time. Chris Stockwell was the House leader at that time and we had agreed to negotiate with regard to her private member's bill, but it fell to the bottom of the list with regard to another matter that the NDP was putting forward. That's the truth with regard to it.

I'd like to thank the members with regard to their matters. I want to reiterate that we think a large part of disclosure under this could take place by following the example of other provinces, and that the potential threat of litigation, which would nullify any increase to disclosure, would be dealt with.

I know this is an emotional issue for many people. I do, however, believe that when a major issue like this—dealing with privacy—comes before the Legislature, it should be debated in full, not in one hour of debate on second reading in private members' hour. This bill, this matter, is far too important to be debated and talked about in private member's legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. Churley:** It's my pleasure to have yet another opportunity to stand and discuss this bill before us tonight. It's with great joy that I discuss this bill tonight, because Mr. Sterling, the member from Lanark–Carleton, is right in that it's very difficult to get private members' bills passed. I consider that a tragedy in itself, and something that the Conservatives promised they would change in their so-called democratic renewal package. They were going to change the rules so that if a private member's bill had I think over 75% support in the Legislature, they would go ahead and let that bill pass. Well, my bill, on numerous occasions, had more support than that and in fact should have been passed. That's something I would like to see happen in this House when there is that much support in the community and reflected in this place, which doesn't happen a whole lot—it did numerous times with adoption disclosure. The government in power, because a few people didn't like it, for whatever reasons—and that's their right, the right of the member for Lanark–Carleton and anybody else. But when, because a few people are opposed to something that the majority of members and the majority of people support, and we have that documented in studies—then that is undemocratic.

**2040**

We are here tonight. Fortunately, we are having a debate. It is a government bill, and that gives us yet another opportunity to discuss the merits of the bill, to talk about some of the work that needs to be done on the committee level, which all of the people here tonight in the gallery want to be involved in and will be involved in, because



we know that there are some holes in the bill. They came forward and discussed it in the committee. That's the kind of stuff we should be talking about here tonight: where the problems are, what the minister is committed to, to the members of the public here tonight and to me and to the standing committee. That's what we need to be moving forward now. This has been a long time coming.

I've never done this here before, but I'm going to read this tonight, something I wrote for the *Toronto Star* on Wednesday, April 16, 1997, if you will bear with me, and if you will indulge me, Mr. Speaker. It says:

"After 29 Years, a Loving Circle is Complete:

"Despite my almost total immersion of late in the megacity madness of Queen's Park"—I remember that—"I have been eagerly watching the unfolding story of Joni Mitchell's reunion with her daughter, Kilauren. For me, this story has a special" interest.

"A little over a year ago, I reunited with a son I gave up for adoption at birth 29 years ago. I was still a teen, abandoned by the baby's father. And, like Joni, I was silenced by guilt and shame and unable to tell my family.

"It was a shockingly lonely and frightening ordeal. It took more than 24 hours after my first contractions to deliver my baby. I was left alone in a room with only a big round clock"—not quite that big—"on the wall to distract me and the occasional disapproving nurse coming in to check on me. I was an unwed mother in a small-town hospital, so the environment was an extremely hostile one. Though I was terrified, no one offered me even a word of comfort.

"When finally the child I had named Andrew emerged, they held him up for me to see. I was overwhelmed. Fresh from my body, he was stunningly beautiful even though he was covered with mucus and blood and crying heartily. The nurse let me touch his head. That was it. They would not let me hold him again because they knew he was to be adopted. When I was leaving hospital, they did pull his bassinet to the glass wall, and from the other side, all the while trying to memorize his features, I said goodbye. I told him he would always be in my heart and that some day we would be together.

"The next time I met my son (renamed William) was last March. We had been corresponding for a short time before that and had spoken on the phone. He is a university student in Waterloo, where I travelled to meet him. The moment I had dreamed of for so many years was about to come true, and as I approached his apartment, I was trembling like a leaf. When he came to the door, we drank each other in with our eyes and then he held out his arms to me.

"This last Christmas was our first together. On his birthday, we blew out a candle and held each other for a long time. He and his sister and three-year-old nephew have grown quickly and touchingly close. And miracle of miracles, I located his father, who came from British Columbia and met Billy for the first time. His arrival I awaited with great trepidation, since I hadn't seen him for almost 30 years. My fears, as it turned out, were groundless: Our time together was a happy one that

provided Billy with the chance to learn the fullness of his biological history.

"So, what of the adoptive parents in all this? We know that Kilauren's parents were afraid of losing their daughter. I understand that and I pass no judgment on how they handled things. In fact, I pass no judgment on how anybody in this triangle deals with such monumental pain, fear and fierce love. There are no other relationships in our lives that provide benchmarks on how to relate to each other in this situation. I do understand your intense fear of losing your child because, you see, I did lose mine. I gave birth to my beloved baby, but in a way, I didn't stop carrying him inside me until the day I found him. After he was born, I cried for months. I look for him on every street corner as the years went by. I had my private ceremonies: on his birthdays, I would light a candle for him. For 28 years, I was among the walking wounded. I never stopped loving him and grieving for him.

"I would say this to loving adoptive parents: Please know that finding a birth mother does not mean you are losing your child. It is clear that Bill's mum is his mum—he loves her in a way that he will never love me. And I don't expect him to. We have a different relationship from mother and son, one that is hard to describe because it is unlike any other relationship I've had. I believe every human being should have the right to know their biological history, and Billy now knows where he comes from. That can only help him develop as a complete person. He knows now he wasn't abandoned but reluctantly relinquished in great sorrow and love. I haven't met his parents yet, but I will soon. Billy loves them very much. In his first letter to me, he said they were the kindest people in the world, who loved him unconditionally and would do anything for him. He told me his father was very moved when he read my first letter to him and said he would like to meet me.

"So I want them to know how grateful I am that Billy has such loving, wonderful parents. And I want them to know that because he has been brought into the loving circle of my family, this in no way diminishes the love and deep connection he has to them. And I thank them for the tremendous support and understanding they are lending Billy as he goes through this with me. They should be proud of the beautiful, sensitive young man they raised and nurtured. They are his parents and nobody can take that away. But I am the woman who nurtured him inside my body and brought him into the world; this also cannot be changed. I think the best choices we can make is to do our best to support the needs of our children and trust that the collective love we have to give them will enrich and heal us all."

That is an article I wrote for the *Toronto Star* some time ago.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Churley:** Thank you. I've never read it aloud before. I got through it.

I read it for a particular reason. I hadn't intended to tonight, but I want to tell you why I read it. To some degree, I like to stay away from the emotional aspects of



this, particularly when it comes to my position, but I was struck by the comments made by the member from Lanark–Carleton tonight. I must say, I was deeply hurt and amazed and shocked by those comments, and it made me want to read this from a mother's perspective.

The member from Lanark–Carleton went out of his way to congratulate Mr. Parsons for being an adoptive father and being such a good man and told him about the respect he has for him as an adoptive father, and I appreciate that; we all do. We all appreciate the adoptive parents in this world who take care of children relinquished for whatever reason. I know Mr. Parsons has taken in many children and is a wonderful father and loves his children very much, just as I talked about the adoptive parents of my son, my birth son.

But I was disturbed by what I consider the misogyny and the sexism in those comments, because I believe, reading between the lines—and there are birth moms here tonight, and there are adoptees and adoptive parents here tonight. I believe embedded in those particular remarks to an adoptive father was distaste for the birth mom. There were no congratulations or no words of admiration for what we went through.

2050

I appreciate Mr. Parsons—I forget his riding; I know I'm supposed to say that—standing up and speaking to that issue, and I very much appreciate his words. But that's the kind of thing that I believe, and I've been watching this debate and participating in it for a number of years now, that I see embedded—not all of the comments from those who oppose but the ones who are most ferociously opposed to the bill. I've noticed that there is that sense of misogyny in their approach to the issue, and I believe that that hurts us all, because what it means is that those particular members and those who constantly are opposed to it do not look at the other side.

I suppose that is human nature. It is human nature. We have a position, and sometimes it's the perils of this kind of democratic system where you've got a government and you've got opposition, and mostly that's the way it works. That's fine. Everybody does it—“Let's find ways to oppose this, because it's a government bill”—but when it comes to a bill that has such a huge impact on people's lives, that is wrong.

We have an obligation. We have an absolute obligation as legislators in this place to make sure we have all the information available about an issue that has such a huge impact on people's lives. There is a wealth of information on this issue. We are not reinventing the wheel here. We are not experimenting here. We are so far behind that it is laughable.

England changed its laws in the 1970s. Jurisdictions all over the world, well before we even thought about it here, changed its laws. Some have disclosure vetoes like here in Canada; yes. Almost all have contact vetoes, but they don't even have contact vetoes in England, since the 1970s. That's something they should be listening to.

“In England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Israel, Argentina, Mexico, several US states, Denmark,

Holland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Germany, France, New Zealand, Australia, British Columbia, Newfoundland, NWT and Nunavut, adoptees can approach their respective birth registries and obtain identifying birth information.” That's a quote from Michael Grand, Ph.D., who is sitting with us tonight with the Adoption Council of Ontario.

This is something we have been putting forward, Mr. Speaker, and you would know, because you've been here, and you've been very supportive in the past. I've always appreciated that. The evidence is there, and that is what is so frustrating about the level and the tone of this debate, and what is so hurtful. When the facts are put on the table and we're debating the facts, that's OK. We can have arguments. We can have arguments and disagreements about the facts. But when it's not the facts, when it's coming from somebody who hasn't done their research and no longer has the correct facts on the table, we're fighting with a phantom object here, and it frightens people. It frightens people who are impacted by this, and that's not fair.

When members who are opposed to this talk about, in particular, a rape victim who may be 75 years old, who may be out there watching tonight. I'd say to the member, don't talk to me about rape, and don't talk to me about being a mother and giving up a child for adoption, and tell me he knows what he's talking about when he brings that up.

I have a quote from somebody from the Coalition for Open Adoption Records, a birth mother who had been raped at age 13: “I feel very frustrated because I consider myself more of an expert on being a raped birth mother than Ann Cavoukian or anybody else. I feel that all my pain, all the abuse, all the money I have spent in therapy, all the education I have acquired in university to try and help lawmakers and others”—it seems to have ended there.

We heard from adult children of rape victims who had reunited with their birth mothers—touching, moving, incredible stories—and we heard from some birth mothers who had been raped, but this is what I want to say about it to anybody who out there who may be fearful tonight. What is wrong about what's being said here is that adoption records—as the minister mentioned earlier, and in fact the privacy commissioner had to correct her own record on this, there has never been confidentiality. Some people may have been promised that they could go away and forget all about having had a baby. Can you imagine? Can you imagine carrying a baby in your body for nine months, feeling it kick inside you, going through a painful birth, seeing that little creature you produced, and you're going to go away and forget about it?

There were social workers who I suppose did tell some birth mothers that to comfort them. It doesn't work that way. You don't have a baby and forget about it. But the reality is that birth registration had the mother's surname on it back then on a constant basis. So for any of those women we're talking about tonight who might have gone away, I admit it would have been an incredibly



painful, horrific experience. But I would say to them that if their grown-up children, I suppose now in their 40s, 50s, even 60s, had wanted to find their birth mothers, they would have done so by now. It ain't hard to do. It just was not hard to do. There was a period of time in history where that got discovered. The government of the day, Conservative, with a minister who was disturbed by this, actually for a while was having numbers put on birth registrations. Can you imagine a baby being born, being taken away and then just given a number on their birth registration? This legislation is necessary for those, or those with very simple, ordinary names who find it hard to contact each other perhaps need this new legislation, these open adoption records, today.

The reality is that there were, and still are, many opportunities for people to find each other. In today's world, with the Internet, with the fact that so many adopted children, when they became adults and even earlier, had the names of their birth mothers, they are finding each other left, right and centre.

I didn't find my son through the adoption registry. Like many others I had put my name in and waited and waited. It was very difficult. But I made a decision, as I think most of us do; we care about our children so very much. For me, I had to feel intuitively, once he hadn't found me, that I must look for him. Then I started the process. I got in touch with Holly Kramer through Parent Finders. I had something called non-identifying information. That's something you can still get through the ministry. That's one of the things we need to work out, that we maintain that, because it's very important, in searching, to have not only the birth certificate—the original birth registration, what this is all about—but also that non-identifying information. That, coupled with the other knowledge from the birth registration, is very important. That's how I found my son. It took some time. I remember that I was up all night, writing that letter to him, and then waiting and going through the process. But the reality is that he knew my name. How many other Churleys do you know? Raise your hand if you know one more Churley in this entire province. There are only a few in the country. It's a very unusual old Newfoundland name. There are not many of us. He had my name. I was a cabinet minister. I was the Registrar General of this place and, I can tell you, it made me crazy knowing that up there in Thunder Bay was his birth registration. I couldn't allow myself to take advantage of my position and get in there to look it up, but I must admit it inspired me to start that search. But after I found him, he told me he knew my name. He used to see my name in elevators—remember?—on the elevator licences. Every elevator had them in Ontario. He used to see it, and he used to wonder, because it is an unusual name, "Could that be my mother." Then he'd think, "Nah, who would have a mother whose name is on a licence in an elevator?" But mark my words, he would have found me one day. He knew my name.

The whole issue of the contact veto: I'm one who would not have minded at all if he'd shown up in this

place and said, "I found you. You're my birth mom." I know there are some who would not like that. I know there are some who don't want contact. I also know from my experience in this issue that there are some who make contact and it doesn't work out. Not everybody's story is as happy as mine. That's a no-brainer. Not everybody's story is as happy, but every single person I know—people who are sitting here tonight, people who have become such good friends of mine, we've worked together for so long—says that at least now they know the big issue. It's great to see your smiling faces here tonight.

**2100**

All of us would like to have a relationship with our blood relatives—mothers with their children, children with their mothers—but we know for a variety of reasons that it doesn't always work out. But what we heard time and time again in committee is that people want to know. Birth mothers want to know that their child is alive and, hopefully, doing well. There's this great, big gaping hole. When you have other children, some people say, "Well, you'll have other children and you'll forget all about that one." You don't. You want to know. Adoptees: Sometimes they find out that they weren't born under the best of circumstances. Remember, we're talking about adults here.

Let's talk about the other side, the very emotional, disturbing side. We've heard from some, and the privacy commissioner about letters, birth mothers threatening to commit suicide if this goes through. I've heard, and there are studies that show, that some adoptees—I've heard from them—have a terrible time, not because they don't have a good family life, and they love their parents, all of that, but because there's something missing. They don't know the things that we take for granted when we're growing up. Just think about it. Think about it for a moment.

Maybe there are adoptees here; I don't even know. But let's assume that everybody here grew up in their birth families. Do you remember the first time your mother said to you, "Your ears stick out just like your grandfather's," or "Your nose is just as big as your Aunt Edna's"—my Aunt Edna is going to kill me for that one, but I have a small nose—or "You sound just like your Great-Uncle Albert"? Or you do something really strange, you have some kind of strange habit, and "That reminds me of my mother." You look at photographs. Think about it. You look at photographs and you see family resemblance. We take that for granted. We know our birth and health history. Of course, the evidence is now there that that health history literally is life and death these days when we know so much about genetically passed-on diseases.

I'm going to read you some of the quotes. Just to finish that thought, though, it's very important that people understand that this bill is not about legislating a relationship. Everybody understands that. There are some in the community who feel that it's wrong even to have a contact veto because people should have the right in a free society to look each other up—it's not stalking—but



nonetheless there's a general consensus that that is something that's important—that doesn't exist now, by the way.

As I said, my son who had my name, could have found me and knocked on my door any time. Evidence shows, by the way, that people don't do that. People just don't do it, because we have lost so much, and when the time comes to come together, nobody wants to do anything that's going to push the other party away. So people walk on eggshells for a while until those relationships are established, if they can be. That is the reality of the situation.

I do want to point out to you that what is interesting, and why I believe it is important for members to do their research—because very recently, interestingly enough, in Western Australia's adoption legislation, the records have been open for some time. I think since January 1995 they had a disclosure veto as well as a contact veto. Very recently, by coincidence, when we were battling out this bill, word came, not through the legal system but through the legislative process, that the government removed the disclosure veto. They removed it. One of the things that research shows is that disclosure vetoes, whether applied against birth parents or adopted adults, are very hurtful and punitive. They prevent medical information from being transmitted, and often the way they are carried out is very confusing. But what people should be looking at is why in Western Australia, in those areas where they've had the experience for a while and decided they didn't need a disclosure veto—why would they remove it?

Those are the kinds of things we should be looking at; not frightening people when they're aware that their names are already out there and adoption is in the family. It was I who revealed this information, and some from the adoption community. We held a press conference. We were trying to get through to people, trying to get through to the privacy commissioner and others who were listening to this, saying, "But wait a minute, you're wrong on this. There have never been legal means of confidentiality, and, furthermore, there's been identification on the adoption orders for a long time."

When that was discovered, this came out: "Alert for birth parents. Adoption identification alert."

"Until recently we believed, on the basis of information that we then had, that outside of the adoption disclosure registry scheme, it was extremely difficult for an individual to obtain identifying information from the registrar of adoption information other than for health, safety and welfare reasons. We are now aware that potentially identifying information from adoption orders is made available to adult adoptees on a routine basis"—on a routine basis.

"An adoption order contains the information set out in a designated form, and includes such information as the child's date of birth, place of birth [municipality, province and country], the name of the judge and address of the court issuing the adoption order, and often the full name of the child before adoption. The child's surname before adoption will likely be [although not always] the

same as that of the birth mother or father. This, together with the other information, can be used as a springboard for identifying the birth parent."

Yes, that's what we have been doing.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** He was the Registrar General at the time.

**Ms. Churley:** Yes, it's true; the former Registrar General should know that this is what we've been doing. Maybe you can get up in the two minutes and point that out, Minister.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** No, no.

**Ms. Churley:** No, you don't want to get into it.

Let me read you some other quotes from when I had public hearings on Bill 77, one of my bills.

"The adoption agencies are neglecting to pass on [medical] information given by birth mothers who are trying to help their adopted children. Life-saving information is being withheld by the very organizations that are being put in place to help and assist." That's from Kariann Ford, an adoptee who came forward, who had a terrible kidney disease. She passed it on to her children. By the time she found out, she was very ill. It was a hereditary disease, and she found out that in fact that information had been left by her birth mother and was never passed on to her. She was pretty angry. She sued. She won a settlement out of court.

Another quote: "There have been no serious breaches of a veto anywhere in Canada. No one has ever accused another individual of violating a contact veto.... Vetoes work. They provide privacy for the small minority who seek it." That's from Wendy Rowney, Coalition for Open Adoption Records, who is here tonight.

The OACAS, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies—we're going to talk about them in a minute, actually. Here's what they said then: "The OACAS supports the underlying philosophy behind Bill 77 and we are of the view that the time is right to bring about greater openness in the adoption disclosure process. It would, indeed, be unfortunate for this bill to fail to be enacted, after all of the adoption disclosure bills that have come before the Legislature in recent years."

2110

I want to talk about that, because I believe their support is absolutely critical and instrumental. Those who oppose adoption disclosure never quote them. We hear quotes from the privacy commissioner all the time, and let me say this: I have a lot of respect for the privacy commissioner. She does a good job. She does her job well, but I don't always agree with her, and in this case, she is not an expert. It falls out of her purview. She admits that. She says that. I asked her for her opinion and she gave her opinion. We had a good meeting. We talked about it. In fact, she's the one who said to me, "I am not an expert in this area. It falls outside my purview. At the end of the day, it's a complicated emotional issue, a social policy issue that should be decided by the Legislature," which is exactly what we're doing.

The real experts who have dealt with the adoption issue for years and years, who know this issue inside out



and have seen the pros and cons of the existing system and followed the history of how we got from A to B, fully support this. In fact, they came forward when I had committee hearings on my Bill 77, when Tony Martin put forward his bill, I believe, and they came forward for the Minister of Community and Social Services' bill, the government's bill, and gave their expert opinion. They know what they're talking about. We have to listen to the real experts. So I would say to any members, any people who are listening, if you're worried about some of the things that have been said about your privacy, read the report by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. They give a very good overview of the history of how we got to where we are.

I'm going to tell you a little bit about it, because it's quite instructive. There were prejudices of the times that started the whole process of secrecy. Has anybody here seen the movie *Secrecy and Lies*? Have you seen it? It's a great movie. It really sums up what I'm trying to say here, the harm that's caused by a lot of secrecy and lies. It relates directly to the issues before us tonight, and that, interestingly enough, is infertility and adoption. That's how this all got started, actually.

"From the time of the Adoption Act of 1927 and during the intervening years up to 1979, adoption records were sealed and complete secrecy was secured. In those years, a birth mother often left the family home or city to conceal her identity and pretend that the birth had never taken place. If a child was born out of wedlock, it was assumed that the label of illegitimacy would damage the child permanently. Single mothers, even more than is the case today, had poor prospects of self-sufficiency or family or societal support. Poor children were thought to have prospects of a better life if removed from poverty and placed with parents, who could provide both material benefits and a more wholesome family life. The third constituency in the adoption triangle, the adoptive parents, were also subject to a social stigma arising from a presumption of infertility. As a result, in many cases, adoptive couples went to great lengths to pretend that the adopted child was their own, and secrecy was considered to be in the best interests of all concerned."

That's what this movie is all about. Fortunately, we've moved on from those days when both illegitimate children and infertility were considered a shameful thing that had to be hidden.

"Notwithstanding the previous emphasis on maintaining a veil of secrecy over the adoption process, there was a change"—which we're all aware of—"in the 1970s, at which time there began to emerge a demand for more information from those connected to adoption."

So the adoption disclosure register of 1979 finally recognized the adoptee's need to know about the past, but it was merely a passive register, and adult adoptees required the written consent of their adoptive parents to enter their names. So we're moving along here slowly.

Then, "In the early 1980s, the courts began to become involved in the issue of adoption disclosure." There were a variety of cases then; something called the Ferguson

decision, which I don't have time to go into tonight. "The Ministry of Community and Social Services notified all CASs that it would no longer provide information from its records, but that CASs could consult with their own counsel as to what action should be taken." Those are the kinds of things that went on.

Then in 1984, the Child and Family Services Act was proclaimed, thereby replacing the Child Welfare Act of 1978. Then the Garber report, which is a very interesting report, was actually commissioned by a Conservative government, Mr. Speaker, your party of the day. It happened as a result of the very concerns that are being raised here—way back then. This is entitled, *Disclosure of Adoption Information: Report of the Special Commissioner, Ralph Garber, DSW, to the Honourable John Sweeney, Minister of Community and Social Services, Government of Ontario*. At that time, this report recommended open adoption records and that they be retroactive. That was way back then.

Going back briefly again, it was in 1979 when Ross McClellan, a former New Democrat here, brought forward the first disclosure registry in North America. The same objections and fears were raised then when Mr. McClellan, who sat over here at the time, brought forward the disclosure registry at that time.

Then a report to a previous Conservative government said we should have open adoption records, that the existing formula was harmful and hurtful and that it should be retroactive; and here we are, it's 2005, and we're hearing the same arguments that have been so discredited now because a Conservative government back then—I think Mr. Sterling was probably here then. Were you?

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** He's been here forever.

**Ms. Churley:** The Sweeney report—you've "been here forever," Mr. Runciman says.

The fact is that we're having this discussion here tonight all these years later. I see that Michael Grand has a white beard now and he's lost some hair. I'm sure the processes of this place contributed to the loss of hair and the white beard, didn't they? But it's great to see you here. All of your work is coming to fruition tonight.

Then, as now, the argument was made that legal secrecy around adoption is mainly to protect the privacy rights of women who gave up their children for adoption. The argument was wrong then, and it should be rejected now. It's nearly 30 years later, and we're still having the same debate. The privacy commissioner's public statement recently was curious because, again, she admits to the fact that she doesn't have jurisdiction in this matter and is not an expert in it.

Dr. Philip Wyatt, chief of genetics at North York General Hospital, said, "Current adoption disclosure laws put the health of more than 300,000 Ontarians at risk. With our ever-increasing understanding of genetics, now more than ever, it is important for every individual to know his or her genetic history."



I want to talk briefly a bit about what seems to be a major issue for those who object to this bill, and that is the retroactivity of this legislation. This is not unknown when it comes to human rights, when humans rights are involved. When something is right, all must benefit, not just those born after a certain date or only under certain conditions. Even if it is a small minority, it is not right to say that 5%, which would be thousands of adult adoptees, are not allowed to have their own personal information.

The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies fully supports Ontario. It says that we lag behind other Canadian jurisdictions and other countries. Disclosure vetoes create two classes of adoptees: those who get basic information about themselves and those who can be denied this fundamental right. It sanctions the violation of the UN Convention. The UN Convention said that every person has the right to their own identity and, if there is a disclosure veto, then you are sanctioning the violation of the charter of rights.

2120

**Mr. Sterling:** Ha.

**Ms. Churley:** Ha ha, yes, it's true, and it's been proven in other countries. If people want to see this go to court, so be it, because it exists in other jurisdictions and it's working successfully.

But I want to repeat again and again and again that this does not legislate a right to a relationship but it does legislate a right to know basic information about yourself. The safeguards are in place—the contact veto. The experience of other provinces that I went into shows that there are problems with the disclosure vetoes. I want to say again that remedial legislation is possible, and that is what this piece of legislation is. It is remedial legislation because it is providing means by which a cause of action may be addressing wrongs of the past and looking for relief. Relief is being obtained. You are addressing wrongs of the past and, when it comes to retroactivity without the disclosure veto, we are talking about fixing a wrong of the past.

The choice to surrender a child for adoption, yes, is a deeply personal, wrenchingly emotional decision, and sometimes not a decision made by the young mother. In the era we're talking about, sometimes the young mother had the child practically torn from her because of societal values at the time, the secrecy and the lack of support. I would say this, too: When we argue and debate this legislation, virtually every government action interferes with personal privacy to some degree. You have to weigh the impact on the majority of people and the rights of the individual. In this case, I'm coming back again to the rights of the individual child—who's no longer a child, but an adult—to know their own basic personal information.

Supposing I said to you, Mr. Speaker—I'm trying to keep you awake here; it's getting late—that your very own birth certificate and registration were locked away in Thunder Bay, and you were about to have your first child. There's no medical problem yet—not yet. It might show up down the road, and because of all the thing we know

about genetics these days, you wanted to know about your birth family. Even if you didn't care about it for yourself, if you didn't have a natural curiosity or didn't feel that need—and some don't feel that need—you're about to have your first child, and you're suddenly getting worried because you don't know anything about your biological and health past, and you want to know. You have a right to know.

What if I were your mother and I put in a disclosure veto, and you were about to have your first child, and you went and said, "I need to have my birth information. I need to know who I am. I need to have an update of the family's medical history," and you were told, "No, sorry, you can't have that"? Even though it's yours—as an adult, it's your information—you were told, "You can't have it because your birth mother has written a disclosure veto. Sorry if you're really concerned about the health of your first child, but that's just the way it is. We're protecting the right of your birth mother"—me—to not, I guess, have my privacy invaded. Let me say to you, Mr. Speaker, once again, that's why the contact veto is there. That is why it's there. We don't need a disclosure veto.

I want to say again, before I wrap up for the evening, to people who have been expressing concern about this aspect of the legislation before us, that I have received hundreds and hundreds—because I've been involved in this issue for a long time—of heartbreaking letters. Lives are being shattered every day. Women are losing babies in miscarriages, and they don't know why. Preventable diseases are being passed on to children. People live their lives in fear, and some are suicidal. It's a sad fact, but a reality. Elderly women in their 70s and 80s are writing me desperate letters. They want to find their children before they die, and they are dying in enormous pain and grief. They just want to know that their children are alive and did well before they die.

Those are some of the things that are going on and happening right now. It is not about a relationship; it is about a basic human right to know. That's what we're debating here tonight.

In closing for tonight, I would say to those who have concerns, do look at the legislation in Australia and England and all kinds of other jurisdictions where there is no disclosure veto; do look at existing legislation here and existing records here, where birth mothers' names are on most adoption records and are accessible—the reality of being able to get access to so-called non-identifying information—do be aware that, for the first time, we have a bill that, yes, legally discloses through the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Registrar General, but at the same time puts in a contact veto, which doesn't exist today. So in fact this bill will bring a protection to those people who have those concerns of unwanted contact that doesn't exist now.

**The Acting Speaker:** It being very close to 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 2127.*

## CONTENTS

Tuesday 25 October 2005

### THIRD READINGS

#### **Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005, Bill 183, Ms. Papatello**

Ms. Papatello.....	391, 397
Mr. Parsons .....	394, 404
Mr. Tascona.....	395, 404
Ms. Horwath.....	396, 405
Ms. Wynne .....	396
Mr. Miller.....	396
Mr. Sterling .....	397, 405
Ms. Churley.....	404, 405
Debate deemed adjourned .....	411

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

MARDI 25 OCTOBRE 2005

### TROISIÈME LECTURE

#### **Loi de 2005 sur la divulgation de renseignements sur les adoptions, projet de loi 183, *M<sup>me</sup> Papatello***

Débat présumé ajourné.....	411
----------------------------	-----





No. 10A

N° 10A

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 26 October 2005**

**Mercredi 26 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.

---

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2

Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2

Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430

Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 26 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### POULTRY FARMERS

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** I'd like to inform the House that today is Chicken Day. Now, why would that be of significance? Well, personally, I grew up with broilers. I'm a former chicken catcher, and as a kid it was always such a thrill to open up the big cardboard boxes with thousands and thousands of day-old chicks for our barns.

You know, it's of significance for all of us. Supply management, for example, has provided decades of business certainty for our chicken farmers and for our food system. Chicken is priced competitively with both beef and pork. Supply management balances supply with demand. It prevents overproduction, flooded markets and depressed prices. That's why so many of us—John Tory, for one—have signed on to the FarmGate5 initiative. FarmGate5 seeks to ensure that the government of Canada secures a balanced trade deal that benefits all farmers, including those in the dairy and poultry sectors.

I would be remiss if I did not make mention of the member from Erie–Lincoln, Tim Hudak, who in 2004 won the celebrity omelette contest at the Smithville PoultryFest. That would be no mean feat. Tim had a secret herb blend and, of course, fresh local eggs. PoultryFest is coming up this year in Smithville on June 24, 2006. I invite all present to attend.

#### PETERBOROUGH CITY SOCCER ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I'm pleased to be able to speak to this House today about the Peterborough City Soccer Association, which is currently celebrating its silver anniversary. Congratulations to everybody involved in the PCSA.

The growth of soccer in our community of Peterborough over the past 25 years has been tremendous. Competitive soccer in Peterborough has come a long way in the past 25 years. Beginning as a place to showcase the talented men playing football in Peterborough, the club now boasts 28 teams: 25 youth teams from U10 to U18 and three adult teams.

Peterborough City is now a well-respected soccer club for girls, boys, men and women at both the adult and youth levels in Ontario. Our youth teams have also played at the top provincial level.

What has made Peterborough City so successful? From its modest beginnings, City has built a first-class soccer facility, a respected reputation and a strong club spirit. All this success is as a result of hundreds of volunteers who each year give thousands of hours to the club and their teams.

I believe the following quotation from the Peterborough City soccer club song is a perfect showcase of the club's spirit:

If you come to Peterborough  
we will welcome you  
Each man will play his heart out  
the 90 minutes through  
We carry the city's honour  
we'll raise it to the heights  
We are the boys  
who wear maroon and white.

The future of the Peterborough City Soccer Association is truly exciting. Let us celebrate the past and look forward to another 25 years of Peterborough City Soccer Association successes.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** The situation which has led to the crisis at Kashechewan First Nation bears questioning of the Attorney General. As the minister who was responsible for aboriginal affairs until quite recently, I would like to ask why you failed to take action sooner.

The community has been under a boil-water advisory for two years, and of course we are all now aware of the 2003 report which identified problems with the drinking water quality at Kashechewan First Nation. I would hate to believe that the Attorney General was more interested in banning pit bulls and other publicity generating events than the health and welfare of a northern rural community. In fact, most of this government's focus has been on the urban agenda, at the expense of rural and northern communities. It is equally distressing that this government was more interested in haggling over who was responsible for taking action than the well-being of its citizens.

Again, my own experience, both in the constituency and in travelling around the north, is that First Nations

seem particularly disadvantaged in this regard, with little interest being shown for their welfare. I suppose the Attorney General was unaware of the province's obligation under the 1992 emergency preparedness agreement between Ottawa and Ontario. We can only hope that under the current Minister of Natural Resources, First Nations can look forward to greater attention. They shouldn't have to come to Queen's Park to beg to get action.

### ROCKTON WORLD'S FAIR

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I rise with a great sense of pride to acknowledge and celebrate the 153rd anniversary of the Rockton World's Fair.

Conceived in 1852 by the Beverley Agricultural Society as a one-day fair, the Rockton Fair now welcomes 100,000-plus visitors over the four-day period each Thanksgiving. A very special event, the Rockton World's Fair combines agriculture, education and entertainment in a number of delightful ways. In fact, it's the dedication of the Rockton Agricultural Society and the hundreds of volunteers who each year help to ensure its success. It's truly a celebration of the contribution of our local farmers and of rural life. The Rockton Fair also provides a considerable boost to the local economy. Visitors to the fair have the opportunity to feast on home-made pies and purchase handmade crafts.

This year we had a very special visitor as we welcomed the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, to the Rockton Fair. She toured the booths and displays and met with local farm leaders. I want to thank the good minister for taking time out of her busy schedule to attend our much-beloved fair and to let her know how much her participation was appreciated.

I call on all members of this assembly to join with me today in giving thanks for 153 wonderful years of caring and sharing; 153 years that mark with distinction and forever the Rockton World's Fair.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** The McGuinty government has created a grave and dangerous situation in my riding of Cambridge and the region of Waterloo by breaking their promise to proceed at once with the \$70-million Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion and upgrades mandated by the Health Services Restructuring Commission in 2002.

The approved project would fund 98 new beds and further expand the present emergency room. The city of Cambridge, the region of Waterloo and generous citizens throughout the region have raised the local share of \$23 million.

1340

The impact is critical. We have a regional health care system, including St. Marys, Grand River and Cambridge

Memorial Hospital, that our families rely on to provide excellent health care services. Essentially, it is a three-legged stool. If you take one leg away, the entire regional health system will collapse. Without a fully integrated regional health care system, we cannot attract and retain family physicians or specialists to our communities. Our region already suffers from a severe lack of doctors.

However, in this grave time the good people of the region and Cambridge have come together to fight the McGuinty government's political decision. Our city has initiated a community-based task force to lobby the McGuinty government. I would like to thank members of that task force.

Premier, I demand that you do the right thing: Stop playing politics with people's lives. Please proceed forthwith with the Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

### TUITION

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** The Canadian Federation of Students had a press conference this morning asking, pleading, urging the Liberal government to freeze tuition fees for yet another two years. Why are they asking for this? Because students are being gouged. Their future is being gouged. Those who worry about the debt burden ought to consider supporting the bill that I will be introducing in approximately seven minutes from now. Students are now paying—Jim Bradley, Minister of Tourism—43% of their own education, versus 22% in 1992. They've doubled. In the deregulated programs they have quadrupled, if not more. To become a lawyer at U. of T. now, you have to spend \$17,000 a year, and it's going to go up to \$25,000.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** You've got to be rich.

**Mr. Marchese:** Only the rich.

Those connected to the Tories and the Liberals can get into those programs. The rest of us have got to struggle. It's just not right.

I urge the Liberals to appeal to Martin, having struck an accord with Jack Layton, to release immediately the \$600 million so that tuition fees can be frozen and/or reduced. Where is the minister on this? I urge those independent Liberal members to support my bill and to support the Canadian Federation of Students, who are here today.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order.

### ACADEMIC TESTING

#### ÉPREUVES ACADÉMIQUES

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** The McGuinty government's education plan is working in Ontario, and especially in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Our Education Quality and Accountability Office test results are remarkable. Here are some examples:



Grade 3 pupils of the Upper Canada District School Board scored a whopping 70% in math.

Les élèves de la sixième année du Conseil scolaire du district catholique de l'Est ontarien ont obtenu en lecture, en écriture et en mathématiques 74 %, 73 % et 78 %. Quel succès.

Les résultats combinés de la troisième et sixième année du Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario ont augmenté de 16 %.

The combined results of grades 3 and 6 for the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario have increased by 10.5%.

Je suis extrêmement fier de nos élèves. Je tiens à féliciter les élèves, les enseignantes et enseignants, la direction des écoles, les conseils scolaires et les parents de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Cette progression constante des résultats montre que nos élèves sont en bonne voie d'atteindre un niveau élevé en littératie et en numératie dès l'âge de 12 ans.

The McGuinty government has made education our number one priority and we are well on the way to meeting the targets.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** There are quite a number of private conversations going on in here, which makes it difficult for the Chair to hear. Maybe, if we're going to do that, we could take them outside. We have lobbies for those purposes.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** I rise today to commend our government for its continued efforts to improve health care in Ottawa and across the province.

Last Friday, our government announced a \$78.4-million investment in new critical cancer radiation equipment and new, more efficient diagnostic equipment for our hospitals. I was pleased to see that the Ottawa region will receive \$16.3 million as part of this investment, which comes after years of neglect by the previous government. Over \$6.7 million will go to the Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre to help people with cancer get treatment more quickly; over \$6.8 million will be used to purchase new diagnostic equipment for Ottawa hospitals; and over \$2.7 million will go to CHEO to improve care for children.

This investment continues a positive trend for Ottawa, a trend that has seen a near 50% increase in the number of MRI scans as well as thousands of additional hip, knee, cancer, cardiac and cataract surgeries in just two years. This is great news for my community of Orléans and for all of Ottawa, which we now know was left with some of the worst wait times after years on the Tory chopping block.

This positive trend isn't limited to Ottawa. Across the province, Ontarians are seeing shorter wait times and are receiving better care thanks to investments made by our government. We believe that Ontarians deserve the best health care, and these steps demonstrate our commitment to that goal.

## POULTRY FARMERS

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** It is my pleasure to rise today to welcome the Chicken Farmers of Ontario to the Legislature and to acknowledge the chicken farmers and producers who have joined us in the gallery today.

This year, the Chicken Farmers of Ontario celebrated 40 years of success as a farmer-operated organization representing 1,100 Ontario chicken producers. In 2004, Ontario produced 319.7 million kilos of chicken meat with a total farm gate value of \$525.7 million. More than 5,000 full-time jobs are directly attributable to this industry, and that doesn't include the spinoff jobs that we have in both urban and rural communities.

The chicken industry in Ontario continues to grow, in no small part attributable to supply management, which is a uniquely Canadian success story. At the upcoming meeting of the World Trade Organization in Hong Kong, Canada's success is going to be under attack. Chicken Farmers of Ontario are calling upon our trade negotiators to support our orderly marketing system and protect Canadian agriculture.

This is a particularly passionate issue for me, Mr. Speaker, as you well know. My husband Rene and I are proud to be one of the 32 chicken-producing families in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Today, Chicken Farmers of Ontario brought the farm to Queen's Park. I hope all the members of the House will take the opportunity to visit the replica of a chicken barn that is parked at the front to learn about the chicken farmers, their industry, their challenges and the good work they do. Finally, I hope all members will join me at the reception—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I didn't hear when that reception was. Did you hear when it was?

**The Speaker:** I'm certain the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex could tell us that.

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** The reception is in committee room number 2, Speaker.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** What time?

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** It starts at 5:30, I believe.

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** Yes, they are telling me 5:30.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated October 26, 2005, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to

standing order 106(e)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on regulations and private bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr13, An Act respecting The University of St. Michael's College;

Bill Pr20, An Act to revive 1376037 Ontario Inc.;

Bill Pr21, An Act to incorporate the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### NO TUITION HIKES ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005

### INTERDISANT L'AUGMENTATION DES DROITS DE SCOLARITÉ

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 12, An Act to implement a ban on hiking post-secondary tuition fees / Projet de loi 12, Loi visant à interdire l'augmentation des droits de scolarité au postsecondaire.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** I'm here and our party is here today to plead with the Premier to continue to freeze tuition fees for yet another two years. The Canadian Federation of Students—all up there—are here today to plead with you and your members to continue to freeze tuition fees as a way of avoiding the debt burden that is growing and getting larger by the minute. They don't want to be gouged, their families don't want to be gouged, and their families don't want their future to be gouged. So they are pleading with you—even you, Minister of Finance—to appeal to the federal government to release the \$600 million based on the accord between Layton and Martin so that you can freeze tuition fees and in fact lower them.

**The Speaker:** It's a brief statement, not a speech.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House**

**Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 26, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat	Patten, Richard
Baird, John R.	Jeffrey, Linda	Peters, Steve
Barrett, Toby	Kennedy, Gerard	Peterson, Tim
Bartolucci, Rick	Klees, Frank	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bountrogianni, Marie	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramal, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Leal, Jeff	Runciman, Robert W.
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Bryant, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Sandals, Liz
Caplan, David	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sergio, Mario
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Smith, Monique
Chudleigh, Ted	McGuinty, Dalton	Smitherman, George
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Tascona, Joseph N.
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Tory, John
Dhillon, Vic	Miller, Norm	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	Milloy, John	Watson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Mitchell, Carol	Wilkinson, John
Duncan, Dwight	Munro, Julia	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	O'Toole, John	Yakabuski, John
Fonseca, Peter	Oraziotti, David	Zimmer, David
Gerretsen, John	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Nays

Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Martel, Shelley
Horwath, Andrea	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 68; the nays are 6.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ECONOMIC POLICY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. What specific measures has your government taken to address the loss of 42,000 manufacturing jobs in Ontario so far this year?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm delighted to receive the question. I know the leader of the official opposition will know that this economy has generated some 193,000 new jobs. You also must be very aware, I'm sure, that we have landed the first new greenfield assembly plant—



we're talking about manufacturing here—in some 10 years. It's the first of its kind in 10 years in Canada: Toyota in Woodstock, Ontario. To pursue the matter of what has happened in the auto sector, the member will also be aware that we have landed \$4.5 billion worth of new investment in the province of Ontario in our first two years. I think, by way of an update, that that speaks loudly to our continuing commitment to secure manufacturing in Ontario.

**Mr. Tory:** Premier, I asked you about the 42,000 manufacturing jobs that have been lost in Ontario and the 42,000 families in communities across this province who have been affected by that and who have one less paycheque coming into the house as a result of having lost their jobs.

The latest to close its plants in Ontario is Imperial Tobacco, with 555 jobs lost in Guelph and another 80 in Aylmer. The Guelph Mercury calls the plant closure a huge blow to the local economy. That's a little different from your Liberal MPP from Guelph–Wellington, who is quoted in the Mercury as saying, "It will cause disruption in the lives of those that will be laid off, but it does prove government legislation is working."

Premier, 635 people—635 families—just lost their jobs. Is this the official line from your government? Is all you have to say to those 42,000 families what you just said a minute ago? What are you doing for them?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I believe the leader of the official opposition has an understanding of what's happening with respect to manufacturing and how it's being affected by this era of globalization. We consider it an important responsibility on our part, with regard to what's taking place in our globalized economy, to look for ways to help manufacturing, in particular, to transition to a point where they are stronger by way of being more productive and more efficient, and also by continuing to invest heavily in the skills and education of our people.

But back to some important facts: In September alone, this economy generated 17,300 new jobs—that's net. Again, I say to the member opposite, he may be full of doom and gloom on the economy, but the facts speak otherwise.

**Mr. Tory:** As the Premier would say, back to some important facts: Forty-two thousand families in this province have been affected by the loss of jobs. We're all happy about the gains you talked about, but there are 42,000 families that have been affected by the loss of jobs in this province, and the trend is not limited to Guelph and Aylmer. In the last round of negotiations between the Big Three automakers and the union, which you referred to, jobs were cut as part of those deals: 1,100 layoffs at Ford in Windsor; 500 to 1,000 layoffs at Chrysler; 1,000 to 1,500 layoffs at General Motors, including St. Catharines. These overshadow the recent Toyota announcement, which we all welcome, by a margin of three to one.

I ask you again, Premier, what specific measures are you taking to help the 2,600 to 3,600 families that have lost their jobs as a result of changes being implemented,

as we speak, by the Big Three automakers? What are you doing for them?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I repeat that there have been 193,100 net new jobs created in Ontario in the past two years. The unemployment rate in our province is at its lowest level since July 2001.

The member is aware of the \$4.5-billion investment in the auto sector, and he knows about the thousands of jobs and spinoffs that will be created in connection with that. But he may not be familiar with others. For example, GlaxoSmithKline recently made a \$23-million expansion that will create 75 new jobs. The Automodular Corp. is building a new plant in Oakville. That's 400 new jobs. Minacs Worldwide is opening up a new call centre in Chatham. That's 300 new jobs. RioCan and Trinity Development Group is investing \$151 million in construction of four new shopping centres in our province. Stream, a Voice over Internet Protocol company, is adding 700 full-time new jobs. Back in my hometown, Dell is adding 500 new jobs. I could go on, but time does not permit.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** What the Premier did not mention is that the unemployment level in this province has been above the national average for several months this year, on your watch, for the first time since World War II.

My question is again to the Premier: Three hundred families in Chesterville, Ontario, in the riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh, have been devastated by the news that, by the middle of next year, their jobs will be no more. Nestlé Canada will be closing its doors in that community, where they've been in business since 1918. What specific measures are you undertaking to help the 300 families in Chesterville who will be affected by those job losses? What are you doing for them, specifically?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, we're not going to pretend, as I'm sure the member opposite would not have us pretend, that somehow there will never be any job losses, any consolidations, any dislocations ever taking place on our watch as a government. I think he would understand that. I'm sure in fact that he would have, at least one time in his career in the business sector, been involved in layoffs. I'm sure he is familiar with that negative aspect of business.

But I can say that we feel for those families. We wish that they were not dislocated. We are going to do our very best to make the kinds of strategic investments to help strengthen this economy. That's why we're investing in the skills and education of our workers; that's why we're getting the fundamental rights; that's why we're making sure there is a reliable supply of electricity; that's why we're making sure we're limiting the deficit they saddled us with. Those are the kinds of things we are doing to strengthen this economy and ensure that every Ontarian can find opportunity.

**Mr. Tory:** Still not one thing for those families. I'll go on.



My colleague for Simcoe–Grey has raised the issue of manufacturing job losses with you directly, as Alcoa Wheel Products in his riding has publicly stated that the higher electricity costs they're now paying are making them uncompetitive—420 jobs at risk.

Backyard Products has already closed down: 230 job losses. Blue Mountain Pottery, closed: 37 people without jobs. Nacan Products, closed: 87 people without jobs. Kaufman Furniture, closed: 150 people out of work.

In this case, both the mayor and the member for Simcoe–Grey, Mr. Wilson, have asked for nothing more than a round table meeting with you to discuss these job losses. Since you haven't agreed to do anything else, would you at least agree to have a round table to discuss these job losses in Collingwood and Simcoe–Grey with the member and the people affected? Will you do that?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** By way of more good news, we have a new call centre announced today in Cornwall. That's 650 new jobs.

*Interjections.*

1410

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I know members opposite may not be interested in this, but those people getting these new jobs are very interested in these stories.

MCCI announced recently in Thunder Bay that while they currently employ 350 people, they're expanding their plant to double their staff to 700 within one year. Durham Contact Centre is opening a contact centre in Trenton. The centre is expected to be open by mid-September. It will employ approximately 190 people. I could go on.

The point is this: We don't pretend to be able to stop all these dislocations, but we are working very hard at the other end to ensure that—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Tory:** The question all the way through, of course, has been—and we'll try one more time—what will you do for the people who have been affected, who are losing their jobs in these communities? I asked if you would do something as simple as having a round table, as requested by the member for Simcoe–Grey, and you didn't even try to answer that question.

Sears Canada recently announced 1,200 job cuts across Canada, with 800 job losses in office functions. The Sears head office is on Jarvis Street in Toronto. Niagara Falls will also see 240 job losses when the ConAgra plant closes.

My question, to wrap it all up, is simply this: What specific measures will you undertake or bring in for the families in Chesterville, Guelph, Aylmer, Collingwood, Windsor, St. Catharines, Toronto and Niagara Falls, the 42,000 families that are seeing the loss of a job, the loss of a paycheque in their family in this province right now? What are you going to do for them?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** By way of more good news, ISRA Textile Manufacturing in Niagara Falls has announced a new plant, and they're going to employ up to 500 people. CAMI Automotive in Ingersoll: 400 additional jobs.

Here are the facts, and they are beyond dispute. Since we earned the privilege of serving Ontarians as their government, the economy has generated 193,100 net new jobs. In September alone, the economy generated 17,300 net new jobs. We have an unemployment rate that is at the lowest rate since July 2001.

We think the most important thing we can do to strengthen people so they can find opportunity in this highly competitive, globalized economy is to invest in their skills and education. That's why there are unprecedented levels of support for education at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels, culminating with a \$6.2-billion investment for those people in college, university and apprenticeships.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. I want to quote some words to you today: "Why did it have to come to this? Why did we have to come here, our backs to the wall? We're residents of Ontario. This should have been done weeks ago, years ago, months ago." Those are the words of Stan Louttit, the Mushkegowuk Grand Chief, and he said them today.

Two years ago, the Ontario Clean Water Agency warned your government, the McGuinty government, that the water supply of Kashechewan First Nation was a Walkerton in the waiting. For two years, the situation got worse; kids got sicker. Premier, why did it take your government, the McGuinty government, two years to listen to the desperate situation of the people of Kashechewan First Nation?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The leader of the NDP raises an important issue, which is the health, safety and well-being of families who are living on the reserve in Kashechewan.

I had an opportunity, together with the Minister of Natural Resources, who was there in his capacity as minister responsible for aboriginal affairs—we had a very good meeting with the representatives of the community. We also had a very good briefing, an excellent briefing, from a doctor who had recently visited the reserve. The conclusion that I quickly came to was that, notwithstanding the fact that responsibility, both for water and the health, safety and well-being of community members, lies with the federal government, we should take the bull by the horns and do what is needed in the circumstances. So we have ordered an evacuation. That will begin at 4 o'clock today. I have committed to Chief Friday and his colleagues that we will work as quickly as we can to make sure those kids are in school and that the families are getting the necessary treatment.

**Mr. Hampton:** The report from the Ontario Clean Water Agency—I emphasize again, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, an arm of your government. You and your cabinet ministers had this report two years ago. It's very clear: No one should have to drink this water. But



for two years you ignored the problem; for two years you tried to say, "Oh, it's strictly a federal problem." But finally, when it came here and got headline, front-page coverage, you decided, "Oops, maybe it is an Ontario issue."

You could have done this two years ago. You should have done it two years ago. Why did people have to suffer under Third World conditions with contaminated water for two years while your government ignored the problem?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** There is a First Nations technical agency—something of that appellation—that asked the Ontario Clean Water Agency to prepare a report, which was then submitted to the federal government. Again, there is no doubt about it: The responsibility for the health, safety and well-being of Ontarians who are located on reserves lies with the federal government. Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor has also made it clear that the principal responsibility for water treatment and water quality also lies with the federal government.

Notwithstanding that, we have insinuated ourselves into this circumstance because we believe that the families living on the reserve deserve nothing less. There are conditions there which are completely unsatisfactory, not conducive to health, not conducive to the well-being of the families. That's why we've come to their assistance.

**Mr. Hampton:** It was the Ontario First Nations Technical Services, part of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, that went to the Ontario Clean Water Agency and asked for help. They asked the Ontario government for help. It was a health emergency then—it was a health emergency in April—when the Minister of Community Safety toured Kashechewan First Nation with community leaders and Gilles Bisson, the MPP for Timmins-James Bay. He saw it then; it was drawn to his particular attention. In fact, he said, "My God, Gilles, I can't believe that these communities are in this shape. It's terrible."

You knew six months ago. This community was asking for your help. Why did the McGuinty government ignore these people, residents of Ontario, who were in a desperate situation? Why did you ignore them six months ago and suddenly you recognize, now that it's on the front pages, that you have a responsibility to do something?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Speaker—

*Interruption.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock.

Premier.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The issues and concerns have been raised by the community for a considerable period of time now, there is no doubt about that, and those issues have been raised with the federal government. More recently, issues related to health were raised with us, and we have acted on that very quickly. I think it's incumbent upon all of us now to do whatever we can to ensure that we're providing whatever support is needed.

As of 4 o'clock this afternoon, we will begin evacuating those members of the community who should be

evacuated according to the determination of the medical experts and the chief. Many members will be located in the community of Timmins. Our responsibilities will now include ensuring that children can go to school. It will also require that we ensure that the necessary medical attention is brought to all those who have been infected by various illnesses.

**The Speaker:** New question?

1420

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Premier: You're trying hard to avoid the issue. Yes, in August 2004, your Minister of Health visited Kashechewan and was shown the deplorable state of the water treatment system and the deplorable state of the water that people were being forced to drink. In fact, your Minister of Health made several promises while he was there. So here is the long and the short of it: Your government was asked for help three times—once when the First Nation went to the Ontario Clean Water Agency; second, when the Minister of Health was there a year ago; third, when the Minister of Community Safety was there six months ago. You did nothing until we brought the issue here and put it on the front page. Premier, can you tell the people of Kashechewan why—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. I could not hear the last part of the leader of the third party's question. We need to maintain some respect for the person who has the floor. Leader of the third party—if you want to complete placing your question.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, you were asked for help three times by representatives of this First Nation over a two-year period. Why did it take you until it got on the front pages of the newspapers to respond in the way you should have responded in the first place?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** This is a serious issue, and we have done what we believe is the right thing to do in the circumstances. Now, maybe I'm missing something. Maybe the leader of the NDP has raised this issue time and time again over the course of the past two years, but I believe this is the first time that he has raised this issue.

I think what we need to do now is turn our minds to the concerns held by that community. The concerns there relate to the poor quality of their drinking water; they relate to the engineering debacle that is to be found in the construction and location of the water treatment plant; they relate to the fact that young children are not in school; and they relate to the fact that the community is subject to flooding on a regular basis, and some thought must now be given to relocating the community. I think the responsibility that we have right now is to address those kinds of issues—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Hampton:** Six months ago, my colleague the member for Timmins-James Bay specifically invited the Minister of Community Safety to go to this community. So don't try to pretend that no one was bringing this to the attention of your government.



You've cited the report of the Walkerton inquiry. I want to quote Mr. Justice O'Connor: "First Nations are also residents of Ontario. There can be no justification for acquiescing in the application of a lesser public health standard on certain residents of Ontario than that enjoyed by others in the province.... The province, if asked [by First Nations], has much to contribute."

Premier, this First Nation asked you three times over the last two years. Why did you ignore their desperate plight?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm going to make reference to recommendation number 89 from Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor's Walkerton report, where he said, "I encourage First Nations and the federal government to formally adopt drinking water standards, applicable to reserves, that are as stringent as, or more stringent than, the standards adopted by the provincial government."

It makes it clear that the principal responsibility for water standards on reserves is a matter that is shared between the community itself and the federal government. What we have done is—notwithstanding the jurisdictional responsibility, which should in fact be assumed by federal government—we have stepped in. We feel that it's important that we lend some assistance to the community there, that we lend a hand to the families that have been affected by their water quality challenges. That's why, as of 4 o'clock this afternoon, we're in the process of beginning an evacuation to bring these families and these children to safety.

**Mr. Hampton:** Two years ago the people of Kashechewan were asking for help from the Ontario government. A year ago, when the Minister of Health visited, they were asking for help from the Ontario government. Six months ago, when the Minister of Community Safety visited the community, they were asking the McGuinty government for help. Mr. Justice O'Connor says there is no justification for your government acquiescing. There are 51 First Nations communities in this province today with boil water advisories. Can you tell me, is your government going to take action on those or will they have to come here to Queen's Park and hold press conferences to embarrass your government before you take action with respect to them? What will it be, Premier—more acquiescence, or are you going to finally recognize that aboriginal people are residents and citizens of Ontario too?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** There is a real issue here: that of jurisdictional responsibility. The NDP may see this as not being of any importance, but I think it's of real importance. I think it's important to the communities involved that we get this right. Who has to take charge to ensure that there is, at a minimum, safe drinking water available to the families on reserves? The Constitution tells us precisely who has that responsibility. It is the federal government. They have failed to discharge that responsibility in the case of this particular community.

Rather than get into an exchange with the federal government, what we have done is we have taken responsibility. We have done what we believe to be the right

thing to do on behalf of these families. There are extraordinary circumstances that obtain here. We've decided that the important thing for us is to lend assistance immediately to these families, and that is what we have done. Again, as of 4 o'clock this afternoon, we will begin evacuation of these communities because we think it's the right thing to do.

## ECONOMIC POLICY

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** My question is for the Premier. I'd like to get back to the subject of jobs and the economy. Just this past month, I was at a conference here in Toronto. One of the speakers was Warren Jestin, senior vice-president and chief economist with Scotia Capital. They talked about the fragility of this economy. Member after member of that group kept saying how jobs were tied to energy in this province, and how your energy policy with regard to the high cost of power and the uncertainty of supply was leaving companies with no option but to shut down operations here, reduce their workforces or cease to plan expansion here in Ontario. Your economic policy and your energy policy are driving jobs out of this province. Are you going to continue to stand by as that happens, or do you have an economic and an energy strategy?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** What a bunch of bunk. A 6.4% unemployment rate, 193,000 new jobs: You don't know what you're talking about. This economy is on a roll. I've got to say to the member, when you look at Toyota and what they've done, they didn't say, "You have high energy costs." They're a full manufacturer. What they said was, "This is the place to invest," giving us a huge vote of confidence in this province.

I might add that over the time that party was in government, over the period of time from about 1994 to 2004, FDI, foreign direct investment, in this province dropped in half. That's the legacy of your economic policies. That's the legacy of a Conservative government.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** They can announce and re-announce the jobs at Woodstock and Toyota 100 times or 1,000 times if they want, but they simply don't cut the mustard when it comes to making up for the jobs you have lost in this province: 25,000 jobs in forestry this year alone—companies like Erco, 150 jobs; Nexen, 23 jobs; Abitibi, just last week, 360 jobs.

1430

You just can't go blindly waving around your flag of GM or Toyota and Woodstock and not address the job losses that continue to happen in this province as a result of your policy. What are you going to do to stop the hemorrhaging of business, jobs and prosperity in this province that is happening on your watch?

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** Isn't it interesting. This is what John Tory had to say when he was president of Rogers



Cable: "It's a sign of the times. Most businesses today are finding that they have to reduce their costs and that includes, unfortunately, people costs." He was advocating getting rid of people and getting rid of their jobs. That's what he was saying when he was CEO of Rogers. That's the kind of management he's going to bring to this place.

I want to repeat all the great investments that are being made in this province: 400 new jobs—these are auto jobs, manufacturing jobs, at Automodular Corp. as a result of the Ford announcement in Oakville. Automodular is going to locate in Oakville. That means 400 brand new jobs in manufacturing to support the auto sector.

The list goes on. Dofasco announced, as a result of a number of positive—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Sit down. New question.

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** My question is to the Premier. Premier, you'll know that in 2003, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, as my leader said, gave your government a report that said that people were at risk of being sick, and possibly worse, as a result of drinking the water in Kashechewan. You will know that the First Nations community's Leo Friday, the chief, along with Stan Louttit, were here, along with others, to demonstrate just how bad the situation is and how sick people are.

I've got a very simple question for you: Will you today stand in your place and apologize on behalf of your government for having failed to protect the citizens of Kashechewan since 2003?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I think we have to have a little historical reality check here. As you know, the community has never made any direct demand to the province, nor would they want to, because they know that the federal government has a treaty obligation to take care of that community, as they do of all First Nation communities across this province. The First Nations guard that very, very carefully and they don't want the province coming in on that. They want that obligation kept by the federal government. That's why they've gone to them. That's why we offered the assistance to the federal government to, "Do your duty to that nation, because it is your obligation to do it." But when the emergency struck, we stepped up to the plate, and people are starting to leave that community this afternoon.

**Mr. Bisson:** Minister, don't you come into this House and pretend to understand what those communities want. What they want is for their children to be safe. They went to your government in 2003 by way of the clean water

report. Your government did nothing. On visits to the community, both your Minister of Health, whom I respect, and the Minister of Community Safety—this issue was raised. People said, "We are scared of the water. There are problems with the water." People have raised it.

I'm saying to you once again that your government has taken some action as a result of what happened here over the last couple of days. The community has a simple question: Is the Premier prepared to stand in this House today and say, "I'm sorry for the inaction of this government," and basically do what has to be done from this point forward?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** I can tell you what the community doesn't want. They don't want NDP-chartered planes full of press coming into the community when we're trying to get planes out to get people out. That's what we're trying to do, and you're putting on a show there. That's what the community wants. We're trying to charter planes so we can evacuate people who are sick, who need medical treatment. You're taking up those planes to take the press up.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. Order. We need to come to order. Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I can wait.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):** Monsieur le Président, ma question est pour le ministre de l'Infrastructure.

Minister, Londoners care very deeply about health care, their doctors, nurses and health care facilities. They are especially proud of their hospitals, which have a reputation as world-class health care facilities. On September 27, you came to London to announce the province's plan for the completion of the children's and women's hospital at London Health Sciences Centre. We are all incredibly excited about the announcement. However, some of the community seems to be concerned about the new financing process being implemented by the Ontario government and how it will affect the quality of care in London's hospitals. Minister, can you explain why these concerns may be misplaced and why our government has chosen to finance hospitals in this manner?

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member from London–Fanshawe for the question. If it's not too late, I want to congratulate you on your appointment to the Chair.

Our government has taken unprecedented action to invest in health care infrastructure like never before. Part of our \$30-billion total investment, our ReNew Ontario program: \$5 billion of investment in hospitals and in health care. The big advantages of using the method here is that we can deliver state-of-the-art medical facilities for people, not only in London but right across Ontario from one end to the other, sooner, faster and more



efficiently. People in London will have access to state-of-the-art medical facilities. Those dedicated professionals, those doctors and nurses, not only will have better working conditions but conditions to be able to treat their patients. Those hospitals will be built sooner, the public interest will be protected, the quality of care will be of an enormous standard, and I'm excited.

**Mr. Ramal:** Minister, what can you tell the naysayers who see no difference in the model than that of the P3 model of the previous government?

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** It wasn't just the previous government; it was the NDP, in fact, that introduced P3s into the province of Ontario. We reject the P3 model of the NDP and the Conservatives.

There are some very key aspects. We've laid that out in a framework for investment called Building a Better Tomorrow. There are five key principles: that public interest is paramount; that value for money must be demonstrated; that there are clear accountability lines; and that—this is a critical difference between the NDP-Conservative P3 approach and AFP—public control is always kept in the hands of the Ontario government and our partners. On the issue of core assets, like hospitals, schools and water, it is that they will always be publicly owned. Those are significant differences to the NDP and Conservative P3 approach.

#### VEHICLE INSPECTION CERTIFICATES

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Minister, you will know the importance of vehicle structural inspection certificates. The public relies on those certificates issued by your ministry to ensure both consumer protection as well as road safety. When a consumer purchases a vehicle, they rely on those certificates to give them confidence that their vehicle is structurally sound. Minister, when a purchase like that takes place and it's found subsequently that the certificate was issued fraudulently, do you believe your ministry has responsibility in that matter, or do you wash your hands of it?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** We take any fraudulent cases very seriously. Any fraud is against the law, and we take those issues very seriously. If the member has any particular case he is prepared to give to me, we will investigate that.

1440

**Mr. Klees:** Well, Minister, I do have a particular case. My constituent, 19-year-old Justin Mejia, saved up \$7,000 to buy his first car so that he could get to and from work. He relied on your ministry's safety certificate when he purchased his first car from Mario Malicia, owner of Elite Import Auto Sales of Hamilton. Two weeks later, the same car was declared structurally unfit to drive by another inspection station of your ministry. Now he's told that it's going to cost him another \$8,000 to get the car back on the road. What's most disturbing to Mr. Mejia is the fact that the Ministry of Transportation is now denying responsibility and refuses to assist him in recovering his \$7,000.

Minister, will you commit, first of all, to a full investigation? Second, will you commit to ensuring that the appropriate charges are laid against that garage, as well as the mechanic who issued that certificate, and will you ensure that your ministry will assist in the recovery of this person's \$7,000?

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** Let me assure the member that my ministry is aware of this case. This case is under investigation right now. What we will do is work with this person to make sure that the case does get full attention. I'm not fully aware of the circumstances of this case, but the case is under investigation.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We're having way too many private conversations around this place. If you want to have other conversations, take them outside.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I have a question for the Premier. Last Thursday, the city of Toronto's policy and finance committee voted in favour of stopping the big pipe—York-Durham's sewer system. The committee recognized how this sewer pipe threatens Toronto's and the surrounding region's drinking water supply. Experts, including your very own Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller, were among those who spoke to the committee and convinced its members to vote for a motion to stop the pipe. Mr. Miller is very concerned about the current design and construction and wants it to receive a full environmental assessment. Will you listen to your own Environmental Commissioner by issuing a stop order and a full environmental assessment of the big pipe today?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'll refer this to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** I want to thank the member for the question. The member will know of course that it was a committee of Toronto's city council that dealt with that matter, not the city of Toronto. It is our understanding that the city of Toronto will be dealing with that issue as early as today. I can assure the member that if the city of Toronto makes a written request to the Minister of the Environment, my minister will give that request immediate attention.

**Ms. Churley:** I must say I'm honestly surprised by that answer, because your own Environmental Commissioner, your own expert, is telling you to stop it and call a full EA. Your government bypassed a full environmental assessment and gave permission for a sewer pipe that will move up to 740 million litres of raw sewage daily across York and Durham to treatment plants in Pickering. If there is even a small break in the bottom half of the big pipe, E. coli and raw sewage will leak directly into the region's groundwater supply. Geologists have provided warnings that a bedrock fault line passes near the proposed sewer route. Your own Environmental



Commissioner wants you to stop the construction of the big pipe for a full EA. I'm going to ask you again: On the heels of the discussion that we're having today about E. coli contamination of water, will you stop this crazy project, this dangerous project, and order a full environmental assessment today?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I just want to put on the record and to remind the member that the work that is going on currently is subject to 40 legally binding conditions set out by the Ministry of the Environment. I can assure the member that the Ministry of the Environment is very interested in that work and is doing its job to make sure that all of those conditions are met. As I mentioned to the member last week, one of conditions was not met previously and we issued a provincial order to deal with that.

As I said, the city of Toronto itself has not dealt with this matter. They will be dealing with it shortly. If we receive a letter, my minister will be giving that immediate consideration—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.

#### COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** My question is to the Minister of Health Promotion. Minister, we're all concerned about the fact that Toronto and area has been rocked throughout the summer and the fall by youth crime and violence—gang violence in particular. Our government is acting by getting more police officers on the street and beefing up our guns and gangs unit, which will go a long way to resolving some of the immediate problems that we have.

At the same time, we must also focus on the causes of this gun violence. Many youth in my community have, in the past, accurately complained that there is nowhere to turn after school, a sentiment that was echoed in a recent *Globe and Mail* article, where one gang member lamented about the fact that lack of access to community centres and basketball courts was certainly contributing to the problem.

Minister, what is the McGuinty government doing to ensure that there are positive opportunities for young people to get involved in after-school activities?

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I want to thank the member from Scarborough Centre, and I also want to pay tribute to the education minister and Minister Bradley, who initiated the community use of schools program last year. We listened to community leaders, who told us, quite frankly, that rising rental costs and extracurricular activity fees were driving individual youth groups and sports leagues out of the schools because they could no longer afford the fees.

The previous government, quite frankly, turned its back on the young people of Scarborough and other communities in this province. I was pleased when our Premier and our government included \$20 million in the last budget for the community use of schools program.

As we heard yesterday about the basketball program in and of itself, 10,000 young people in the GTA area were deprived of the opportunity of playing basketball because of high rental costs. Scarborough Basketball, which Mr. Duguid is interested in, had their user fees reduced under this program by this government by—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. There may be a supplementary. Supplementary?

**Mr. Duguid:** I can tell by the heckles today that—again, I was taken aback yesterday when the opposition expressed total indifference to the important strides that we're making in ensuring that our young people have access to important recreation facilities and programs. The opposition appear to believe that providing young people with recreational activities, be it basketball or anything else, for that matter, should not be a priority for this government. I couldn't disagree more.

The previous government killed recreation programs in the province; the third party appears to be indifferent to it. Can the minister share with this Legislature some examples of how the community use of schools has impacted the lives of our young people?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** The Conservatives and the NDP may laugh at our young athletes who want to give something back to their community and get involved in extra-curricular activities, but this program is not just about basketball. Urban Family Outreach, a non-profit charity, was able to run three new summer camps as a result of the community use of schools because of reduced fees. Rexdale soccer league doubled their participation. Scouts, guides and air cadets were all able to see their fees reduced from \$85 to \$17.

Yesterday, the NDP insulted the young people who are involved in sports and recreation, one of the great unifiers in our society. They voted against the community use of schools, thereby endorsing higher fees for young people. I tell the NDP: Why are you against young people getting involved in extracurricular activities? The NDP, once a great party of principle, is now relegated to cheap stunts, rhetoric and empty promises—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. We'll stop the clock for a minute. We can wait.

The member for Durham.

1450

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** It seems that the Minister of Health Promotion is quite pumped today.

My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I'm asking you a question today, Minister, on behalf of my constituent. This is a gentleman who's 31 years old, he's the parent of two children, and his spouse is a stay-at-home spouse to raise their children. In 2001 my constituent had exhausted all practical medical remedies for his condition of ITP, which is a euphemism for a cancer term. His treatment options in Ontario were



exhausted and he had no choice but to attend the Mayo Clinic, where he received Rituxan. The suggestion was by his physician. However, at \$17,000, Minister, the question here is: Would you please advise what steps my constituent can take to get this out-of-country coverage for a life-saving condition?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I will try to be of some guidance, but it was unclear from the honourable member if what was being sought was compensation for out-of-country coverage that was acquired by the patient without prior approval. There are circumstances, of course, where an approval process allows for an Ontarian to access a service outside our province in certain circumstances. Those are well outlined and they're exactly as they were when your party was in office. The gentleman will have the opportunity, through the Health Services Appeal and Review Board, of taking his case forward. I'm happy to work with the honourable member, with the presentation of a bit more information, but that would traditionally be the mechanism that would be available to the individual.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Minister, this is not a new issue. I brought this up during estimates with you directly. I have written you, on April 29, and again on the 13th. Let's keep this down at the level of human beings, the condition of a family. This is a 31-year-old gentleman with a life-threatening condition and we're asking you to not just toss this off to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board. I'm asking you today, will you simply look at this file? I would be pleased to share the name personally with you. I have their permission to do that. Do that for this family. Would you respond to that, Minister, please?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Most certainly. As I said in my earlier answer, I am happy to work with the honourable member on this more specifically. At the same time, in expressing compassion for any individual in Ontario who is experiencing a health difficulty, it is important that I also be conscious of my legal responsibilities and of the authorities that a Minister of Health has and those that a Minister of Health does not have. I had the chance to answer on a similar question from one of your colleagues. The circumstances are the same as they have been in our province since, I believe, legislation in 1991; that is, a Minister of Health does not have the discretion to override decisions related to that. But that notwithstanding, on the honourable member's question, will we assist him in this individual case, getting to the bottom of it? Yes, we most absolutely will.

#### MINIMUM WAGE

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Minister of Labour. More than a million people in the GTA alone are working themselves to the bone and still living in poverty. The reason that's happening is because Ontario's minimum wage does not pay them enough. Most are workers of colour, most are recent immigrants and most are women. Some can't

come home to be with their children because they are working two or three jobs just to pay the rent. Minister, Ontario's minimum wage is not enough for these workers to live on. What are you prepared to do, as the new minister, to get these families out of poverty?

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** Thanks to the member for the question. Certainly, as a government, we recognize the serious plight of people in this province, and as a government, we moved forward with raising the minimum wage, the first increase that took place in nine years, because we recognize these are some of the most vulnerable individuals in the province. On February 1, 2005, the minimum wage was increased for the second stage. We moved forward with a four-year transition to move that minimum wage to \$8 an hour. Certainly we recognize the challenges that this may have impacted on businesses, and that's why we've moved in a responsible manner, phasing this in over a four-year period.

**Mr. Prue:** I ask the minister, how about being responsible to the working poor, who are making \$7.45 an hour, \$15,000 a year? We've seen that ministers of your government are able to eat steak, are able to spend \$50,000 in just nine days. That's three times as much as a family of six are able to have in a whole year. These workers work in health care, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, clerical and service work.

Tomorrow, representatives from ISARC are coming here and they're going to ask you what you're going to do for justice for hard-working people. What are you going to say to these delegates: that in two years they're going to earn \$8 an hour, in two years they're still going to live in poverty and two years from now, these families are still going to be suffering? Is that going to be your answer, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** As I said in my opening comment, for nine years in this province there was a freeze on the minimum wage. Even back to your own time in government, from 1991-95, you increased the minimum wage by 85 cents. We recognize that there was a period of time when some of the most vulnerable citizens in this province had not seen a wage increase, and that's why we've moved forward. This year saw the second instalment of that increase and, by 2007, the minimum wage in this province will be \$8 an hour.

As well, we've moved forward on a number of other fronts, whether it's providing assistance through affordable housing in this province or through community and social services with the increases in disability support payments. We have a plan in place to help those vulnerable individuals on the electrical front. We've moved forward on child care as well.

#### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge):** I'd like to preface my question to the Minister of Energy with congratulations. This is my first opportunity to pose a question to her in the Legislature since her appointment as Minister of Energy.



Minister, I'm aware that you were in Belwood, near Fergus, yesterday and announced a new regulation that will help Ontarians develop clean, renewable energy right in their own yards. I've had constituents in my riding who are cottage owners asking me about putting up solar panels on the roof of their cottages. Some are even interested in small-scale wind turbines on their properties up north. These, and Ontarians in general, want to make a positive difference in the air we all breathe, and if they can save some money on their electricity bill along the way, all the better.

I'm sure there will be plenty of people who would like to know more about these options that are open to them. Minister, can you please tell me how my constituents can best take advantage of the new net metering regulation?

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** Thanks to the member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge for the question. I would also like to take this opportunity and publicly thank you for being vice-chair of the conservation action team, who, along with 10 other members, did an absolutely superb job. It also gives me an opportunity to say that there was an alternative fuel all-party committee that did some excellent work that we're able to draw upon as well. It really does go to show you how important conservation and alternatives are in this Legislature.

The first thing the cottagers need to do is determine what type of renewable energy they would like to participate in. For example, it could be wind, wind and water, run of the river—probably not. It could be biomass, but I doubt it. That would be more for agriculture. They might in fact want to go with the associations and ask for some support and help, in particular with their local distribution company. You'll find that they will—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

**Mr. Arthurs:** My constituents are interested in setting up more than a couple of solar panels; they want to put together larger-scale projects. I have farmers in my riding who are talking about taking advantage of the biomass they create and using it as another source of revenue. Farmers are talking about putting up wind turbines in their fields in my riding. There are many thousands of Ontarians who have seen North America's tallest and largest wind turbine, and, with respect to my Toronto colleagues, that's not at the CNE; that's on the waterfront in Pickering.

1500

There are lots of good ideas out there and a lot of opportunities for enterprising Ontarians. Minister, what are our government and you, as the energy minister, going to do to help people who simply want to do more than make their meters spin backwards?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** As you know, yesterday was about net metering, and it was an opportunity for someone to put in place generation for up to 500 kilowatts. The previous minister asked the Ontario Power Authority to come back with a standard offer, along with the Ontario Energy Board, and we hope that will be here by the end of the year. There will be opportunities for

individuals to generate electricity and sell it directly back into the grid. Not only will we be producing the renewable energy we need to meet our commitment of 5% by 2007 and 10% by 2010, but at the same time Ontarians will be able to participate in helping us to generate that new capacity as well.

## ECONOMIC POLICY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. A recent report from the OECD puts Canada's productivity rate at 12th in the world. In 2003, we were third. Ontario is the economic engine of this country, and we have lost 10 points under your watch. What are you doing to keep Ontario from turning into Canada's economic caboose?

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** I would point to Roger Martin's studies on productivity rates. When he looked at the prosperity gap between Ontario and 16 jurisdictions in North America, we were 13th out of 16. During the time we've been in government, we actually closed the gap. We went from about 6,000 per capita GDP at the time we took office in 2003, and that gap has been closed significantly to about 3,000 now. So we're on the right track.

Productivity remains a challenge. One of the things we have done in this province, which I might point out as significant, is with respect to research funding. We funded \$300 million in our ORF. I might add that we have put forward an agenda for commercializing that research, something you didn't do when you were the government.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** The minister is quite right: Productivity is a challenge. It's a tender balance between delivering government services and creating an economic environment in which industry and businesses can survive and thrive. Increasing taxes, increasing gasoline prices, increasing hydro rates, increasing costs to businesses, and on and on, take precious money out of businesses' ability to reinvest in their companies. Without that reinvestment, these companies are not going to be able to maintain their productivity.

Changing the jurisdictions that you measure yourself against doesn't solve the problem. The jurisdiction we're concerned about is Ontario in the Canadian context, and increasing Ontario's productivity rate is paramount to becoming a successful jurisdiction. I'm not sure you understand this, Mr. Minister, and I'd like to know what you're doing to turn this situation around, specifically so that companies will have more money to invest in their businesses.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I'm going to need a few people to move so that I can see the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** One of the other things that Roger Martin pointed out was the fact that when that government was in power, they cut the wrong taxes—even if you agreed with cutting taxes. We, on the other



hand, are reducing the capital tax in Ontario, something you left behind. Roger Martin points out that if you want more investment in this province, which increases productivity, you should be reducing the capital tax, and we're doing just that. The last budget and the one before it pointed to that.

I say to the member, when you were the government, the productivity gap between Ontario and the US doubled. That was your legacy.

## PETITIONS

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I have a petition, signed by good citizens of the region of Waterloo, to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, headed "Save Our Hospital."

"Whereas the \$80-million expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital was approved in 2002 pursuant to the mandate of the Health Services Restructuring Commission; and

"Whereas the plans for the project have been in the works for the past two years; and

"Whereas the residents of Cambridge and North Dumfries, the city of Cambridge and the region of Waterloo have contributed their share of the project; and

"Whereas the decision to cancel the expansion will adversely affect and diminish health care in Waterloo region;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Resolved that the McGuinty government reverse its decision to cancel the Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion and hospital upgrades."

I sign my name thereto.

### CANCER TREATMENT

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that has been given to me by residents of Toronto. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

"Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

"Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

"Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the" government "of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of patients."

I agree with the petitioners. I have affixed my signature to this.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** There are too many conversations again.

Petitions? The member for Scarborough Southwest.

### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Sonny Sansone, community leader and activist at Cataraqui Crescent, along with other residents of Scarborough Southwest are happy with the recent announcement by the Attorney General regarding guns and crime;

"Whereas gun violence is really affecting the quality of life and safety of residents in the Scarborough Southwest community;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ensure that any strategy to fight gun violence should include funding for youth programs like street hockey, basketball and youth empowerment."

I agree with this petition, and I affix my signature to it.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas children with autism who have reached the age of six years are no longer being discharged from their preschool autism program; and

"Whereas these children should be getting the best special education possible in the form of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) within the school system; and

"Whereas there are approximately 700 preschool children with autism across Ontario who are required to wait indefinitely for placement in the program, and there are also countless school-age children that are not receiving the support they require in the school system; and

"Whereas this situation has an impact on the families, extended families and friends of all of these children; and

"Whereas, as stated on the Web site for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 'IBI can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Its objective is to decrease the frequency of challenging behaviours, build social skills and promote language development';

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fund the treatment of IBI for all pre-school children awaiting services. We also petition the



Legislature of Ontario to fund an education program in the form of ABA in the school system."

#### PENSION PLANS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed mostly by good working people of Hamilton.

"Whereas every Ontario worker has the right to a secure pension that is indexed to inflation and provides the dignity of a stable and sufficient income for retirement;

"Whereas pensions represent workers' deferred wages and all pension contributions belong to the workers;

"Whereas people who work all their lives deserve the right to retire with a decent pension at age 65 without having to worry about making ends meet;

"Whereas the pension system is sorely in need of reform; it hasn't been reviewed since 1987 and many Ontario seniors have seen the value of their pensions vastly reduced over the years;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the government of Ontario to form a special legislative committee on pension reform to study ways to ensure that all workers have the ability: (1) to participate in a pension plan; (2) to have a real say in how the plan is managed and governed; and (3) to have vesting from day one, indexing, portability from job to job and absolute protection of their pension through a much-enhanced pension benefit guarantee fund and stronger provincial legislation."

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature.

1510

#### CLASS SIZE

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and signed by about 1,000 of my constituents.

"Whereas class sizes have been capped at 20 from grades 1 to 3, we believe that the class size for the junior grades should be capped at a similar student-teacher ratio. It has been indicated that lower class numbers make for a better learning environment. Regardless of age, all children have the right to equal opportunities for success in all schools.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Legislative Assembly will introduce a capped number of students, similar to that of primary grades, for grades 4 to 6."

I sent this to you via page Mandy.

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** "Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new

cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

"Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

"Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

"Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of" their patients in Ontario.

This has my signature of support.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** This petition has been signed by folks from Guelph and reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas every Ontario worker has the right to a secure pension that is indexed to inflation and provides the dignity of stable and sufficient income for retirement;

"Whereas pensions represent workers' deferred wages and all pension contributions belong to the workers;

"Whereas people who work all their lives deserve the right to retire with a decent pension at age 65 without having to worry about making ends meet;

"Whereas the pension system is in sore need of reform; it hasn't been revised since 1987 and many Ontario seniors have seen the value of their pensions vastly reduced over the years;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the government of Ontario to form a special legislative committee on pension reform to study ways to ensure that all workers have the ability: (1) to participate in a pension plan; (2) to have a real say in how the plan is managed and governed; and (3) to have vesting from day one, indexing, portability from job to job and absolute protection of their pension through a much-enhanced pension benefit guarantee fund and stronger provincial legislation."

I agree with the petitioners, and I've affixed my signature to this.

#### MANDATORY RETIREMENT

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas existing legislation enforcing mandatory retirement is discriminatory; and

"Whereas it is the basic human right of Ontario citizens over the age of 65 to earn a living and contribute to society; and

"Whereas the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories have also abolished mandatory retirement in various forms; and

"Whereas ending mandatory retirement is a viable means of boosting the Ontario labour force and accommodating the growing need for skilled workers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government should act by abolishing mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is best achieved by passing Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement."

Since I agree, I'm delighted to affix my signature to this document.

#### REGIONAL CENTRES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I'd like to present to the House a petition. This pile totals over 7,000. It's from the Huronia Helpers organization. It says:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty and his Liberal government were elected based on their promise to rebuild public services in Ontario;

"Whereas the Minister of Community and Social Services has announced plans to close Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, many of whom have multiple diagnoses and severe problems that cannot be met in the community;

"Whereas closing Huronia Regional Centre will have a devastating impact on residents with developmental disabilities, their families, the developmental services sector and the economies of the local communities; and

"Whereas Ontario could use the professional staff and facilities of Huronia Regional Centre to extend specialized services, support and professional training to many more clients who live in the community, in partnership with families and community agencies;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government to keep Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, open, and to transform them into 'centres of excellence' to provide specialized services and support to Ontarians with developmental" disabilities, "no matter where they live."

I'm pleased to sign my name to that, and I will present it to Kiki to take down to you.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This is another petition from people in Hamilton.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas every Ontario worker has the right to a secure pension that is indexed to inflation and provides the dignity of a stable and sufficient income for retirement;

"Whereas pensions represent workers' deferred wages and all pension contributions belong to the workers;

"Whereas people who work all their lives deserve the right to retire with a decent pension at age 65 without having to worry about making ends meet;

"Whereas the pension system is sorely in need of reform; it hasn't been reviewed since 1987 and many Ontario seniors have seen the value of their pensions vastly reduced over the years;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"We call on the government of Ontario to form a special legislative committee on pension reform to study ways to ensure that all workers have the ability: (1) to participate in a pension plan; (2) to have a real say in how the plan is managed and governed; and (3) to have vesting from day one, indexing, portability from job to job and absolute protection of their pension through a much-enhanced pension benefit guarantee fund and stronger provincial legislation."

Again, I agree with this. I will affix my name and send it to the Clerks' table via Graeme.

#### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** Thank you for recognizing the wonderful constituency of Hamilton West.

"To the Legislature:

"Whereas we feel that the present penalties for endangering or harming animals are too lenient, we request that these be increased." We have over 700 names.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"Increase the penalties for endangering or harming animals."

I agree with this petition, and I will sign it.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** Recently, I met with the Community Living people and others, who presented me with these petitions.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas without appropriate support people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and



"Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector, to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I'm pleased to endorse and support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham.

### MANDATORY RETIREMENT

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas existing legislation enforcing mandatory retirement is discriminatory; and

"Whereas it is the basic human right of Ontario citizens over the age of 65 to earn a living and contribute to society; and

"Whereas the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories have also abolished mandatory retirement in various forms; and

"Whereas ending mandatory retirement is a viable means for boosting the Ontario labour force and accommodating the growing need for skilled workers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government should act by abolishing mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is best achieved by passing Bill 211, an Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement."

I'll affix my name to this petition.

1520

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 24, 2005, on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Further debate.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** It's my pleasure to have a few moments this afternoon to make my remarks about the throne speech, which we heard about a week and a half ago now. I have to say that it's funny—the timing was interesting—because kids have just gotten back to school, have been in school for a

couple of weeks, and my son was doing that as well, the usual things. Conversations started around what you're going to have for lunch, and who's bringing what to lunch. It's funny, because when I got here and listened to the throne speech, the analogy that came to mind was that we here in this Legislature were getting a lunch-bag letdown similar to the ones my son was already describing that his friends at school were getting.

The throne speech was certainly a lunch-bag letdown for the people of Ontario. Why is that? I think people expected us to come back to an important new vision that the government was going to lay out with great fanfare, after in fact coming back a couple of weeks later than expected. Theoretically, I was thinking that that extra time was being taken up for the government to lay out exactly a positive new direction that they were hoping to embark on.

Of course, that was my first throne speech as a member of this House. Having been elected in a by-election, I wasn't able to participate in or attend the first throne speech that this government read in the House. Unfortunately, my first experience with a throne speech was in fact a lunch-bag letdown. After it was over, my initial thought was, "where's the meat?" Where is the important, new, bold vision that the government was trying to explain or trying to get at with the throne speech? It wasn't there. Unfortunately, the new agenda was a non-agenda. The goals and priorities were no different from the 20 or 30—actually, 60 or 70—promises that the government had already broken. It was warmed-over meat loaf, I think one of the other members described it as in a discussion about the throne speech. I can't disagree with that description.

It's unfortunate, because when this government was first running for election back in 2003, they made some significant promises to the people of Ontario. We, on this side of the House, all spent the last two years unveiling, one after the other, these broken promises, broken promises, broken promises. So of course we expected to come back to this House to a throne speech that set a new course, that was supposed to—at least in my humble and inexperienced opinion with regard to the way this House works—re-inspire the people of Ontario, that was supposed to reconfirm that the government actually does have a plan on something—on anything. Unfortunately, we found out that the government in fact doesn't have a plan for a heck of a lot of things.

I'm going to spend some of my time this afternoon talking about some things that I was surprised not to see in the throne speech, that I was disappointed weren't in the throne speech, that I think ordinary Ontarians were looking for, were hoping for. They were desperately wanting to see some signals that their government understood their issues, was aware of the concerns they have and was prepared, through the throne speech, to actually start addressing some of the concerns, to actually start acknowledging that the two years so far have been a wasted two years in terms of the people of Ontario having any recognizable benefit to government policies



since the last government was booted out. Unfortunately, that's not the case.

Even with this throne speech now, we're looking at a further two years where the government has still not acknowledged that the people of Ontario have some real, significant concerns and problems that they expect their government to address. What do we get in the throne speech? The biggest announcement, the thing that everyone was all atwitter about, was a rebate on birth certificates if they don't come in on time. Give me a break. If that is the major piece of your throne speech, then you guys have got to get back to the think tank and start figuring out what exactly your job is.

Does anybody have a problem with the fact that they expect birth certificates to come in a timely manner? Of course not. But the arrogance to expect that every single person in Ontario can equally take advantage of that offer, that back-of-the-cereal-box kind of offer: "If you don't get it in two weeks, you'll get your money back." But guess what? The only people who will get their money back are people who have credit cards, because you have to pay by credit card. Why do you have to pay by credit card? Because you have to apply for it on-line. So there you have two significant barriers for many people in Ontario to even access the big centrepiece of the pitiful throne speech, the money-back guarantee for birth certificates. I shook my head in absolute surprise.

I represent a riding, Hamilton East, where many people don't have access to the Internet and do not have a credit card. In fact, the very people who are often searching for documentation, who need things like birth certificates to be able to apply for other kinds of assistance and help, are the ones who are not going to be able to pay for these documents by credit card. I was absolutely stunned that the government so callously celebrates this announcement and totally glosses over the fact that there are hundreds of thousands, likely millions of people in Ontario, who will not even be able to get the windfall of the money-back guarantee on birth certificates.

When I talked about the lunch-bag letdown that this throne speech was, what it means for me is that the government has not realized that they need to do some major initiatives to sustain families in the province of Ontario. Families in Ontario are looking around today. They are looking at their cheque books at the end of the month and are looking at their accounts at the end of the month, if they're so lucky to have them. They're looking at their circumstances during the month, and at the end of the day, families in Ontario are realizing that after two years of Liberal governance, they are no better off and, in some cases, are worse off than they were two years ago.

Why do I say that? We're in the month of October. We're almost at the end of the month of October. People are already shaking in their boots to see what their bills are going to be as their bills start to climb over October, over November, over December. Those hydro bills are going to be going up. Those heating bills are going to be going up. People are already hurting from the gasoline

increases that were not managed at all by this province when they did that huge spike. Yes, they're levelling off, but they're still rather high for people to be able to afford.

So here we have a throne speech, coming into the winter months, that doesn't even address some of the basic issues that the people of Ontario expect their government to deal with, just some of the down-and-dirty daily things that people need to have addressed by a government if they're going to see, not even an improvement, but just a maintenance of their quality of life. As I said, that maintenance has not existed over the last two years. The quality of life of the people of Ontario is very slowly eroding because the government is not undertaking the kinds of initiatives that the regular people of Ontario, that Ontario's working families, that Ontario's ordinary families expect them to undertake.

Instead, we have a government that decides, after having promised that it's not going to increase taxes, to then turn around and announce almost immediately that it's going to increase taxes in the form of a health tax for all the people of Ontario. So already one of the initial actions of the government after being elected is to increase costs to the families of Ontario by putting this health tax on them.

1530

As if that's not bad enough, they decide to implement a health tax that disproportionately burdens lower-income families over those with higher incomes. What you end up with is people in lower-income brackets having to pay a higher proportion of their earnings, of their take-home pay, if you want to call it that, on the health tax. It's bad enough that that promise was broken, but when the government deliberately refuses to acknowledge that some people in this province are much better able to pay than others, and therefore to adjust its policies accordingly, it sends a signal that they are either—well, I wouldn't say they are ignorant of the facts, because obviously they made that decision based on some kind of information, but they didn't think it would matter. They didn't think there would be enough of a kerfuffle over the fact that they are hitting the lower-income families harder. I don't know why. Maybe they figure that lower-income families are not going to be voting for them anyway, so they don't care. I certainly hope it wasn't that. I certainly hope the government wasn't callously targeting lower-income families, but I can tell you that that is the result of their policy, of the way they decided to implement their health tax.

Do we hear anything about that in the throne speech? No. We don't hear anything about their regressive tax regime, except maybe some allusions to the fact that the way they are dealing with our health care crisis in Ontario is through ensuring that Bay Street gets its cut of our health care dollars through the implementation of P3 hospitals. Maybe that's what they see as the way to deal with the health care issues. Now we're paying extra tax dollars with the health premium that this government implemented on the people of Ontario, and guess what?



The money we're now paying as a portion of our taxes every year is going to go directly to Bay Street as the government unfolds more and more of their P3 capital projects, which they vilified the previous government for when in opposition.

You've got to ask yourself exactly what that throne speech was all about. I have to tell you, on this side of the House, on my measuring stick, it was much ado about nothing, as they say.

I want to go back a little bit to the energy cost issue, because already we've had calls in my office. The calls in my office last winter went through to the spring and into the summer. People just got so far behind last winter that even into July and August we were still trying to help them solve their problems when it came to the fact that they couldn't afford utility costs. In fact, in the city of Hamilton, we've had several fires over the last couple of months and most of those fires were as a result of unsafe use of candles. Those candles were being used because people couldn't afford to light their homes, they can't afford the hydro costs or they've been cut off and can't afford the reconnection fee. So it's a serious situation. Has this problem been solved? No. The government has its head in the sand. It has its head in a hole like an ostrich, pretending that somehow the people of Ontario are going to be able to get through the winter. It's just not going to happen. There are going to be numbers and numbers of families who are not going to be able to get through this winter; mark my words.

It's not only going to be because of the energy costs, because hydro is going up and heating costs are going up; it's also going to be because thousands upon thousands of families have lost their jobs. Some 42,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in this province. Those are manufacturing jobs. Those are the jobs that pay decent wages, that have decent pensions, that have health benefits and dental and eye care. Those are the kinds of jobs that are being lost. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade got up today, talking about the net gain of jobs in Ontario, but look at the fine print and you'll see that the majority of jobs being created are not the kind that are good, well-paying jobs, where people can actually support their families on one job, where they can get a decent wage and decent benefits and have a decent quality of life. Those are not the jobs. It's not just a matter of the cost that everyone is going to be incurring as we roll into the winter months because this government has not addressed some of those major problems in energy and heating costs, but the fact that people are losing their jobs. They won't even have the paycheques to pay for things like heating and hydro and increasing rents, which I know, Mr. Speaker, for you particularly, is an ongoing issue.

Hundreds of thousands and millions of people in Ontario are tenants, and that government decided when they were running, when they were trying to get votes from tenants, that they were going to promise that the Tenant Protection Act put in by the previous government—which did wrong by tenants, in my opinion, and

in yours, Mr. Speaker, I know—was going to be fixed. In fact, they said they would fix the Tenant Protection Act within one year of being elected. Guess what? It's into the third year and there has been no amendment to the Tenant Protection Act. Rents are still very difficult for people to cover and landlords are still increasing rents on vacant apartments, so the market is still a different place for people who have affordability problems in the province.

Speaking of which, whatever happened to affordable housing? Again, this government gets up and pretends that it's building affordable housing. The Speaker in the chair tonight, when he's wearing his hat as a member of this caucus, happens to be the critic for housing, and guess what? He can tell you as easily as I can tell you that this government is simply glossing over reality when they talk about their achievements in housing. Something like 65 units have been built in this province. In Hamilton, there are 5,000 families on the waiting list for affordable housing. In Toronto, it's something like 70,000 families on a waiting list.

So please, let's get down to brass tacks, I tell these government members. Let's go back to the drawing board and start thinking up the real things that are going to effect real change in this province that Ontario families would like to see.

I talked a little bit about job loss. It's an interesting thing. I was at a couple of events in Hamilton recently, and I ran into some leaders of industry. Some of our major manufacturing companies were there—it was a fundraiser for the children's aid society—and I got a chance to talk to them and just feel them out on how they're feeling about Ontario's prospects for the future in terms of the viability of their existing manufacturing concerns. They were extremely forthright in their criticism of this government's handling of the hydro file. It's another thing that could have been addressed in the throne speech, but it wasn't. It's something that the government could have at least acknowledged, could have said, "We've got a plan for this. We're trying to work with stakeholders, workers and industry to try to solve some of the concerns about the competitiveness of Ontario industry, about the bedrock of jobs that we need to maintain a decent quality of life in this province." But no, there was nothing there.

And so we watch my leader, Howard Hampton, and our northern members in this Legislature day after day, talking about the forestry crisis in northern Ontario, about the hundreds and hundreds of jobs that are being lost on a daily basis. That's not like southern Ontario, where you lose a plant and it's very tough on a community. Things are rough, and some mom-and-pop stores close down because there's just money sucked out of that community. Yes, that happens, but in some of these northern Ontario communities, a whole community can be devastated by the closure of a mill. One mill just closed last week because of the inaction of this government and their refusal to acknowledge that their hydro policy is closing down companies, closing down forestry jobs, and is in fact closing down communities in the north.



But it's not just forestry; it's the chemical industry, the manufacturing industry and all of those industries that rely on hydro in large quantities. What happens is, when they're trying to get the energy they need to run their furnaces and mills, they have to go on to the spot market. Sometimes the price is \$2,000 per kilowatt hour. Who the heck can survive that?

In fact, I was up in the Legislature just last week talking about a mill in Hamilton that's having to lay off its workers at least once or twice a week. At least once or twice a week, those workers get laid off and sent home because there's not enough hydro to fire the furnaces to keep this steel mill running.

What kind of government ignores those signals from industry, ignores those realities that are happening in the north in forestry, and in the south as well because a lot of services and companies in the southern parts of Ontario feed those northern mills and feed forestry and the pulp and paper industries; certainly they do. So it's not a northern versus a southern issue; it's an Ontario issue that should have been addressed in the throne speech about a week ago, but it wasn't there. It wasn't in the throne speech, nor were many issues that need to be addressed. The multi-faith social justice groups will be here in the next little while. They're concerned too because the problem is that the level of poverty in this province is increasing no end. This government does not have a plan to deal with the growing poverty in Ontario.

They have not committed to a plan in this throne speech and that's a disgrace for every single one of us.

1540

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** It gives me great pleasure to speak to our throne speech, a speech that at its core focuses on 12 million people, the people who live here in Ontario. It is about strengthening our economy through our greatest resource, and our greatest resource is our human resource, leveraging our people, because since we came into government we have turned this ship around. We came into government with a \$6-billion deficit that has been lowered to \$1.6 billion through the great work of our Minister of Finance and our Premier and the visionary measures that have been taken.

We are making sure that Ontarians get value for money through government, that everything is measured and we can have measurable results. We have brought stability and peace to our workplace. For eight years, our teachers were always in a situation of strife, with a government not respecting them, not acknowledging them. We made sure that for the first time in the history of Ontario there were four-year contracts with our teachers. We have long-term contracts with our public service, long-term contracts with our health care providers.

We have turned this ship around and are making headway to where the people of Ontario want to go, and that is a government that is focused on them, focused on creating an economy that is knowledge-based, on invest-

ments in higher education—an unprecedented \$6.2 billion being spent for our colleges and universities, never seen before. These are milestones that we are achieving at the fastest of paces so that we can make sure we have prosperity today and for the future in Ontario.

This is a great throne speech, something all Ontarians should be proud of, and it gives me great pleasure to have spoken to it.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** It's amazing the different perspectives there are on this throne speech. There's a rosy perspective down here, and then just a few seats down the House this throne speech has been a disaster. In the election campaign of the government over here, there were over 230 promises made to the people of Ontario. Up until the point of this throne speech, over 50 promises had been broken. This throne speech didn't mention the 170 yet-to-be-fulfilled promises. They're just out there in the ether someplace, floating around. Perhaps they'll come back; perhaps they won't; perhaps they'll be broken. We don't know what's going to happen to those ones.

In the meantime, Ontario families are struggling to make ends meet. These are real pocketbook issues. These issues deal with jobs. They deal with families who are bringing home the same money they did two years ago, or if they've had a raise, it's been a very small raise, and yet at the same time they are paying increased crippling health taxes. They're paying more for gasoline. They're paying more for electricity because this government broke a promise on electricity prices. They're paying more for natural gas. They're paying more in property taxes. Next year, tuition fees are going to rise, after a Liberal freeze, and those tuition fees are going up considerably—to say nothing of the physiotherapists, chiropractors and eye exams that people now have to pay for under this government, which in a form is a tax, when they said they would have no new taxes. So this throne speech is a huge disappointment. I only sit 15 seats down from the member who thinks this throne speech was the greatest thing in the world. I don't know how long he intends to stay in this House. But as long as you're in this House, I hope that this is the worst throne speech that you ever hear because Ontario can't take too much more of this.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** The member from Hamilton East, Andrea Horwath, demonstrates once again what an incredibly valuable contribution she's making to this Legislature, and how this chamber has been enhanced by her election in the by-election in Hamilton East. It is such a pleasure to work with her. It's such a pleasure to be the beneficiary of her acute and not uncritical analysis of things that are dealt with on a daily basis here in the legislative chamber.

Folks in Hamilton East should be incredibly proud of the hard work that Ms. Horwath does here, in her riding, in her constituency office and indeed across the province as she fights for working women and men and their pensions, as she fights for families living in apartment buildings and their right not to have a landlord, a crooked



landlord, undermine their physical security, their health and safety by ripping off the component of the rent that's designed to pay for hydro and heat. That's why Ms. Horwath has, for instance, been such a strong advocate of legislation: her introduction of the Fred Gloger bill, which would prevent, during the cold months, the termination of hydro and fuel services, natural gas in most cases, when that would have an incredibly dangerous impact. Look, she indicated that she's the one who rang the alarm bells but this week about landlord-tenant prosecutions in the city of Hamilton not being heard in provincial offences court until the year 2007—not 2006 but 2007. Landlords who are violating the rights of their tenants are running—

**The Acting Speaker:** Time has expired. Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes to comment on the comments made by the member from Hamilton East. Before I do that, I just wanted to say that I was quite surprised to hear that the member from the Progressive Conservative Party didn't have a single positive thing to say about anything that's happening here at Queen's Park, in this Legislature. We've got a plan that we laid out in the throne speech that deals with the major issues that we campaigned on: a better health care system, a better education system, a functioning energy sector, as well as other key issues which we'll get into later on this afternoon.

Just looking at the health care portfolio, which is so important—it's right here in the throne speech: The "government is reducing wait times for key medical procedures by providing: 8% more CT scans; 11% more cancer surgeries; 16% more cataract surgeries; 17% more cardiac procedures; 28% more hip and knee replacements; and 42% more MRI scans."

This is what people in Ontario want to hear. They don't want to know what the Progressive Conservatives did, holding budget speeches in car parts plants, giving tax breaks to corporations, and seeing the deterioration of our schools and of our education system in general, as well as our health care system. It has taken years—it's going to take years to replace the damage they've done. We're on a path to fix that. We're on a path to bring in a better education system, a better health care system and a number of other reforms that were included in the throne speech.

A number of other members here today from the Liberal Party will be speaking to that. I think that we've got a very positive, optimistic future to look forward to, and this throne speech lays the groundwork for that.

1550

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Hamilton East has two minutes in which to respond.

**Ms. Horwath:** I want to thank the members from Mississauga East, Halton, Niagara Centre and Scarborough Southwest for their comments.

I just wanted to follow up on the remarks that the member from Niagara Centre was making just before the

end of his time. That was the fact that the Attorney General gets up in this House on a regular basis and makes claims about reformation of the justice system, while in the city of Hamilton—and I asked the question, and he had no answer for it yesterday—the justices of the peace are in such short supply that when we finally do get the conviction of this particular landlord on charges laid by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the ministry people are foiled in their attempt to bring justice to these tenants because the Attorney General has not solved the ongoing problem of the lack of justices of the peace in the system.

The bottom line is that back in January 2005, and again just a couple of weeks ago, the city of Hamilton begged, urged and petitioned this province to fix the problem of the lack of justices of the peace. He can talk all he wants about the reform of the justice system and all his nice words, but they mean naught if you're in a situation like the city of Hamilton is in. If there is a serious issue that has to come to trial, has to come to a provincial offences court, guess what happens? It will take one day per month, maybe for the next 10 years, to be able to address that issue, because there is not enough court time available for these hearings to be scheduled.

It's a sad day in Ontario when nothing was said of that in the throne speech, when the government gets up and pretends that they are actually doing something, but the reality on the ground, in municipalities like Hamilton, shows that they are doing nothing to address the problem of the backlog in our provincial offences courts.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I'm delighted to join in this debate on the throne speech. Let me say at the outset that I will be sharing my time with the very distinguished member from Mississauga South.

We recognize, first, that everything we do depends on Ontario's prosperity, whether it is the ability of our businesses to compete, our capacity to fund a caring society or the opportunities that will be available to our kids. That's why the McGuinty government is working with Ontarians to strengthen Ontario's economy: in education, in the skills of our people and in improving the health of our people, fostering innovation, leveraging our diversity and getting fundamental rights approved.

The positive results we've seen over these past two years—from higher test scores in our schools, to shorter wait times in our hospitals, to over 193,000 new jobs—are the product of Ontarians working hard, working well and working together.

Education is an example. We have seen smaller class sizes and improved test scores. New textbooks and other learning resources are replacing worn-out, outdated textbooks, and new library books will stock school shelves, thanks to a \$61-million investment.

Every school, regardless of size or geographic location—and every student—will benefit from this investment. Our children will also see better conditions in which to learn. Our Good Places to Learn initiative will support school construction, facilitate repair and renewal



projects, in the amount of about \$4 billion over three years, and will benefit over 1.5 million children.

New legislation is on its way, too, in making it mandatory for young people to keep learning until they are 18 years old. The new alternative high school diploma will recognize the importance of learning a skill or a trade, and we're implementing our Reaching Higher plan for post-secondary education, which will invest \$6.2 billion more in universities and colleges over five years.

I know that many of us here today who are MPPs, on all sides of the House, thanks to the generosity of previous governments—I'm thinking about the Bill Davis era and the Robarts era—in terms of expanding our schools, expanding the horizon of education and creating new universities right across Ontario—thanks to those opportunities, many of us are here today. We therefore have a great responsibility on our shoulders to extend again, as a good Ontario government, the dollars and the hope that are needed to produce the students and the skills so they can compete in the international market.

The world today is just one globe. Our neighbour is not just the person living next to us or the person in the next street, but also the person far away in another country. It has been said that it's a global economy—no doubt. Having said that, we know that the person in China is our neighbour too. It just takes a few hours, or now a few minutes, and we are just as much affected in terms of our health or our education or our investment strategy. It takes just seconds to shift vast amounts of money around the globe, affecting every taxpayer of Ontario.

It is true that our neighbour here and our neighbour in whatever country we pick affect us directly, sometimes to our benefit and sometimes detrimentally. Therefore, we have to work out a strategy—and the throne speech actually addresses some of these issues—where we begin to understand, where we begin to have a new idea, where we begin to have a shift in thinking to really understand that we are one family. We know that when we're talking about crime in Toronto or when we're talking about sickness or education, the problems that are facing every Ontarian will be at our doorstep soon. We must therefore consider doing something about that, and the throne speech directly affects some of these kids. I'll talk about this in specifics. I'll talk about this and how we are developing and creating the programs that are necessary for skills to compete.

Our Best Start plan enables Ontario kids to begin school fully prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. Children's health is a top priority, as was demonstrated with the recent announcement of new funding for student nutrition programs and the implementation of a minimum 20 minutes per day for physical activity. As part of our commitment in terms of health and the success of our kids and youth in Ontario, the government has recently doubled its investment in nutrition programs, from \$4.5 million to \$8.5 million annually. More than 2,500 kids across the province of Ontario will receive funding. This is a revamped program. A healthy breakfast, lunch or

snack will be provided each day to approximately 67,000 students in elementary and secondary schools.

In health, we've seen dramatic increases in the number of CT scans, cancer surgeries, cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures, hip and knee replacements and MRI scans. Shorter waiting times: That's our goal. This means that the people in Davenport, my riding, will enjoy shorter wait times and potentially improved prognoses of illnesses caught by MRIs in the early stages. Family health teams feature doctors working alongside other health care professionals. And we are focusing on protecting the health of Ontarians by investing in public health, combatting smoking, requiring daily physical exercise activities in our grade schools, introducing legislation to protect drinking water and reducing smog by replacing coal-fired electricity generation systems.

Our province is rich in diversity and welcomes the best and brightest from all over the world. My riding of Davenport celebrates the fact that it is one of the most diverse in Ontario. At least 30% of us are new immigrants in Ontario. The government is expanding training programs and also English as a second language instruction. When people arrive in Ontario from abroad, you must also try to make sure they have some services, some English-as-a-second-language programs and above all else some programs to bring them in so they too become taxpayers, some programs that will open the doors, especially in terms of professions and trades.

#### 1600

We've come a long way in terms of opening the doors to professions and trades. They were closed. They were shut. There is, of course, a difference in attitude. The attitude in the past has been, "OK, you're smart. Here is the test—take it. You want to be an accountant? You want to be a physician? You want to be a pediatrician? Take the test. Here, go do it." Of course the failure rate was high. Why? It's obvious: No experience locally; no experience in terms of Ontario rules, laws and procedures. It is clear that if we don't open the doors to professions and trades, we'll continue to see them as taxi drivers, as cleaners. We've been fighting this for a long time, but I must tell you, we have come a long way. The attitude has changed now. You know what it is now? "OK, you want to pass the test? Come on in. We'll give you a hand. Here are the rules and regulations for Ontario. You make us a promise to study hard and we'll make you a promise that you can pass if you have at least a basic intelligence."

This attitude of a closed door as opposed to an open door has changed in Ontario today. And we are the better for it, because we are now opening the doors and having them as productive citizens. A productive citizen is a more confident person. A productive citizen is also a taxpayer who supports all our institutions and makes us more competitive.

We are lucky to have as our next speaker the MPP from Mississauga South, Mr. Tim Peterson.

**Mr. Tim Peterson (Mississauga South):** When the Lieutenant Governor, James Bartleman, delivered the



speech from the throne, he described it as “a speech for the people of Ontario: the millions of Ontarians who get up and work hard every day to reach higher, to build a better life for themselves and their children and a brighter future for their province and their country.” It is with great pleasure that I can report that the 38th Parliament of Ontario is continuing to support the people of Ontario with better education, more responsive health care and a healthier economy, so that each person, each family, can maximize their potential and realize a brighter future.

As I reflect on my riding of Mississauga South, I reflect on where I was married, where my children were born, where my wife and I built our businesses and where we have contributed to the social fabric of our community. When I joined this House two years ago, I targeted four main issues on behalf of my community: (1) the unfair funding of social services in Peel, also known as Fair Share for Peel. Due to rapid growth in Peel and the frozen funding formulas for social services, children and families in Peel get 50% less support than the families in Toronto and the rest of Ontario; (2) the burning of coal at the Lakeview generating plant; (3) the polluted beaches of Lake Ontario in Mississauga South; and (4) the unfair representation of the city of Mississauga within the region of Peel. Despite having 70% of the population, we had 40% of the votes.

In two short years, our government has made improvements to three of these four issues. On children's services, Marie Bountrogianni corrected the funding formulas for Best Start and autism. There is more to be done, but we are resolved to continue this fight. We have closed the Lakeview generating plant. We have adjusted the voting imbalance in Peel by giving Mississauga 50% of the votes.

Today, I wish to add two new items to my list: the building of the Mississauga South Charity, a master charity that will help other charities in Mississauga South, and the remediation and recirculation of brown-field sites in Mississauga South. I am pleased to report that with community support, both of these are moving forward. Hopefully, major announcements will be forthcoming shortly.

My reason for mentioning these community-based projects is to re-emphasize to all that Mississauga South is strongly committed to family, to community and to economic growth. While I am the first Liberal elected in Mississauga South since Confederation, it was because the community trusted me as one of theirs, as one who would maintain and build upon these values, for these were the values of Mrs. Marland and Mr. Kennedy, the people who held this seat before me. This support of individuals, families and community is the mantra, the stamp of Premier Dalton McGuinty. It not only reflects his personal values, but his guiding values as he steers the ship of Ontario.

But as I look around this magnificent and august chamber, I feel the presence of other leaders. I feel the spirit of Stephen Lewis. I want this chamber to be blessed again with his captivating idealism and his wonderful

rhetoric. I feel the ghost of John Robarts. I was witness to his gentle, paternal charm and his quiet, disarming but effective manner. Any government would be blessed to have more of these qualities. I sense the presence of Bill Davis, with his incisive wit, cutting criticism and circular management style that kept Ontario at the centre of Canadian Confederation. I also have memories, as many of you have, of David Peterson's quick, familiar humour, warm, mischievous smile, inclusive approach and voluminous memory.

But the most important presence I feel in this chamber, in the space above the chandeliers, is the presence of my parents, Clarence and Marie Peterson, for it is upon their shoulders that my brothers and I have built our lives, our families and our careers. My parents, Marie and Clarence Peterson, have lived the dream of this throne speech, the Ontario dream—indeed, the Canadian dream. Both of my parents were raised by single mothers. My father's parents were Norwegian immigrants living in Manitoba, and after six years of courtship, my father finally accumulated enough money to marry his sweetheart from Saskatchewan. Amazingly, my mother graduated from university and went into teaching. My father used his raw talent to train himself in banking, sales and marketing, real estate and personnel management so that he could anchor his own business.

When my parents finally settled in London, Ontario, in the late 1940s, they put down the roots that would anchor them—anchor their successful business, anchor their active family and anchor their numerous society-building endeavours. The loving success of their marriage is unique. The success of their business will one day help their grandchildren. To those who are skeptical about having three sons in politics, they remain delightfully oblivious. But there are no skeptics as to the great contribution they made to London. They built the Liberal Party in London, Ontario, the same way they built their farm, the same way they helped build the Canadian Club, Westminster College, London Little Theatre, the London hunt club, the YMCA and the city of London—indeed, the way they helped build their friends, their family and, last but not least, each other.

I offer today the example of my parents, who support our government's attempts to build a better education system, a better health system and a better economy, so that many can achieve today what only a few like my parents could achieve yesterday. If any members of this House are winding their way past London, please stop off at 550 Dufferin Avenue for coffee, sandwiches and great conversation. My mother and father are both 92. They will treat you to 184 years of personal and political history that will leave you in awe—in awe of their love for each other, in awe of their courage, in awe of their success in helping to build their city, their province and their country.

By working together, we can educate the illiterate and innumerate, restore the health of the sick, and build a strong, robust economy for all. This is the vision of Premier Dalton McGuinty. This is the inclusive mandate



of the 38th Parliament of Ontario. This is the future of Ontario and Canada.

1610

Thank you very much for this opportunity to make this personal speech. As we go forward, I am very pleased that my children are taking the benefit of the wonderful education system, especially in Lorne Park. My daughter is in grade 12 and is participating at Lorne Park Secondary School as a member of the high-performance development team. My son has just gone to Laurier university and has become a member of the basketball team. It is in them that I will find my future, as today I find my great delight in what they are achieving on the foundation of what we have all given them. If I am successful, they will be appreciative and will understand that they must pass that on to their children and their children's children.

It is a great honour to be able to make this speech today. Thank you for your time.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chudleigh:** It's interesting. The member talks about Lorne Park Secondary School. Personally, I went to Thomas L. Kennedy Secondary School. Thomas L. Kennedy, of course, is my grandfather, and I felt that was probably the only high school I could ever graduate from, because the teachers were very benevolent to me there. But I did spend a lot of time down at Lorne Park Secondary School, because there were a couple of girls, who are probably now married and wouldn't like to be associated with—I won't mention their names, but we used to spend some time down at Lorne Park Secondary School. Of course, the football and basketball games were always exciting.

The member mentioned the goals of his government, and those are laudable goals—goals for a better health care system, goals for a better educational system. It's disappointing, to me on this side of the House, that those goals aren't being reached, those goals about reducing wait times. Wait lists are no shorter than they were when this government was elected, and it's no easier to find a family doctor than it was two years ago.

They've spent millions of dollars in severance pay to fire 1,000 nurses. They said they were going to hire 8,000 nurses, and before the end of their mandate, they may very well do that, but they have spent a lot of money in severance pay getting rid of 1,000 of them, to say nothing about the cost to the average citizen in Ontario—that they have to pay for physio, they have to pay for chiropractors, they have to pay for their eye examinations now. Since you have to take this money out of your pocket, this is not a way to improve the goals of a better health care system.

You also set up a brand new health bureaucracy with the LHINs. The same thing happened there, with the LHINs replacing the district health councils. The district health council people were all fired and paid severances, and then they were rehired as the LHINs—another huge mismanagement. So it's very disappointing to hear him talk about goals of health care.

**Mr. Kormos:** It was a true delight to listen to the comments of the member for Davenport, Mr. Ruprecht, who has been working a long time on the file for the recognition of foreign-trained professionals, and continues to work on that file. I join him, as I have often, in calling upon this government to keep its promise to expedite the recognition of the credentials of foreign-trained professionals. Surely—and I understand the frustration of Mr. Ruprecht, because he's committed to it. I know he is. I only wish his Premier was, and I only wish the cabinet of this McGuinty government would share the commitment and passion for expediting the recognition of foreign-trained professionals that Mr. Ruprecht has.

I was similarly pleased with the comments by Mr. Peterson from Mississauga South, and I tell people that he has made his presence known here at Queen's Park. It was wonderful to hear these people so enthusiastic about the throne speech, because I was here on the day of the throne speech, and the Liberal backbench had never been more glum, sullen and unenthusiastic. There were no pompoms; there were no rah-rahs; it was hard. You couldn't get a round of applause out of it. It was their own finance minister, their own government having written the darned thing, read by Mr. Bartleman. What a sad-faced bunch when they listened to the thin gruel offered up by this feckless, unenthusiastic and, quite frankly, unimaginative—if you're going to make stuff up, make up big things. They couldn't even make up big things; they had to make up mundane things. That's what was most depressing. These guys were in shock. It's nice to see they have come out of it and are now able to feign some enthusiasm.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the time to stand up and speak for two minutes about the throne speech and about the different speakers who spoke before me.

Mr. Speaker, I was listening to you when you were in a different capacity yesterday, sitting in your chair and talking about the school system. You were talking about poverty in schools, about the school structure and about different areas. We share your feelings and your vision about better schooling. That's why the throne speech talked about these issues. That's why the government of Ontario, the McGuinty government, is investing more money in schools, creating peace and tranquility between the teachers, the parents and the government. That's the first time in a long time.

I was listening to the member from Davenport talk about accreditation. This area is very dear to my heart. Many people who decide to choose Canada as a final destination to live and raise a family come with experience, education and a profession. That's why our government is working hard to make it easier to get accredited, to fit them into the system and make them taxpayers, because that's very important to all of us—not just for them, but for us as Ontarians. We want every person to be able to use his or her education and talent to be a part of building this great community and this great province that all of us enjoy and love and that we call Ontario.



Our government increased the number of foreign-trained doctors from 90 to 200, worked with all the regulatory bodies to make some kind of transition, creating a bridge program through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to help all newcomers find their way, to find a mechanism to enable them to fit in the system and get accredited.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak.

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I'm pleased to be able to offer a couple of comments on the speakers so far, and particularly on the member from Mississauga South. I would have to say off the top that I found his personal history more interesting than much of the throne speech, because of the fact that there was so much of it that is so typical of the kind of resourcefulness, the kind of qualities of hard work, determination and vision that families share. It really doesn't matter whether you are someone who has been in this country for many generations or a few years. There is that sense of recognition, of the importance of free speech and the elements of a democratic society, the opportunities both economic and social that this member clearly touched on in presenting that very personal history.

I think all of us can look back fondly on the experiences we had as young people growing up in Ontario and the opportunities this province has provided for us. Quite frankly, as I mentioned at the outset, it's in many ways more interesting than the throne speech. When we look at some of the details, which I will have an opportunity to do in a few minutes, we see it's rather disappointing. Words like "warmed over" and things such as that generally characterize the approach many people took in responding to the throne speech itself.

1620

**The Acting Speaker:** Either the member for Davenport or the member for Mississauga South may respond.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Thank you to my colleagues who talked about this subject: the members for Halton, Niagara Centre, London—Fanshawe and York North.

To the member from Halton, very briefly, I wish you had not mentioned the nurses. I was here when your government fired 8,000 nurses—you were sitting right there. Not only was that not enough; you rehired them and paid almost twice as much to get them back.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Check your facts.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Those are the facts. If you don't believe it, we'll get together outside the Legislature and have a press conference about this, and you can get the facts on this.

I want to thank the member for Niagara Centre very much for his kind comments that I'm leading the fight for accreditation and opening the doors for foreign-trained professionals. Thank you. I appreciate that very much.

Right next to me—in fact, right here—is the minister who is going to help us not only to open the doors but to open the doors much, much wider in terms of accreditation. He's right here, and he made a commitment. He's right here, and he can speak to it. Not only have we continued to improve the relationship between foreign-

trained professionals and what's happening today in Ontario, but he's going to take it a step further because of his commitment to the cause.

No doubt there is more to do—much more to do. There is much more to do in terms of the safety of our communities; we made a promise in the throne speech of 1,000 more police officers. There is certainly much more to do in terms of identity theft. We know, for instance, that 6.8% of adults have been victimized by identity theft, and a striking 43% of adults have received a phishing contact. In other words, there are hundreds of people out there sitting at their computers trying to enter and get information from us in terms of our numbers.

Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Munro:** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Nepean—Carleton.

To begin my comments today I want to talk a little bit about what has historically been the purpose of a throne speech. It was designed as something that would offer to the public, to legislators, to everyone in the community, a major announcement that would clarify for everyone the vision of the future. Past governments always used this opportunity to lay out a plan: where they wanted to take the province, the manner in which they thought they would be able to make the province better and how they would carry out the promises they had made to the people at the time of the election.

Certainly, as a member of the previous government, I was very conscious of the fact that throne speeches were, in fact, those kinds of opportunities and that the throne speech then outlined the course that the government would follow. In doing so, they exposed in a way that was appropriate the principles upon which the government had made its election promises and the principles that stood behind the actions it was going to take.

But this throne speech, in this Legislature in 2005, has been reduced to a list of reannouncements. Policies that the government has neglected to get around to putting into effect and promises that remain broken are part of this throne speech. Many of the reannouncements are things that we've heard several times. A concern I have, which I think was shared by members of the press, is the fact that this government has failed to express a vision of the future, and so much of that is because of the fact that they have not been able to accomplish their goals from the past. So it really exposes, I think, a sense of concern amongst thoughtful people in that they make such promises, as we know, and then have trouble meeting them and also moving on to a new and improved vision of the future.

This is a very troubling trend that was certainly revealed in this. Again, going back to my own particular experience, when I was elected as part of a government, it was based on the idea that there were principles and from those principles flowed policies which translated into practical government action.

It seems to me that this is really the malaise of this government, and it showed in this throne speech. If you



look at the question of reannouncements, for instance, you can very easily find so many examples.

Even the question of coal-fired electricity generation: The government announced in its platform that it was committed to closing those, and steadfastly stayed with the 2007 date until just recently. It has now been changed to the 2009 deadline, but was, again, reannounced in this throne speech.

An announcement made again in the election platform had to do with drinking water protection at source, and again it's announced in this throne speech as if it were something new that the government was going to undertake.

Even smart meters: I remember those were being suggested, and again they appear in this throne speech, again with some deadlines. Obviously, it's fair to think that people are going to see them as moving targets.

I was interested that the member from Davenport even referred to the 1,000 police officers, because that was certainly something very clearly in the election platform, and in the throne speech it's again being reannounced.

People have talked about the fact that maybe there is nothing new in this throne speech. Well, I found a couple: the creation of two new Web sites—one to deal with class sizes and one to deal with waiting times. I think people are able to understand that the Web site notion is strictly an administrative bureaucratic proposal. It doesn't do anything to shorten wait times; it just means you can read about them. I think it tends to speak to that lack of vision that I mentioned at the very beginning.

Of course, the other new item is the question of the rebate. Certainly when I heard it, I couldn't believe a government would seriously be looking at such a gimmick as something like this. People actually want a birth certificate. That's really more important to them than the question of following a particular procedure which will then give them a rebate. That's really not what they are after.

As I studied the reannounced promises of this visionless throne speech, I was struck by the absence of any reference to culture. As the critic for culture, I searched for references to preserve our history and heritage. The word "culture" appears three times in the speech but not in a single reference to anything the Minister of Culture should be protecting. Does this government not realize that our provincial archives building is falling apart? Do they not think that preserving our documentary history is important? What political principle drove them to cut the budget of small-town libraries last summer? Is this the way to promote education? Don't they think libraries are important?

Preserving our heritage is a principle we value on this side of the House. That is why we were willing to sign an agreement to move our archives and to spend the money necessary to move them to a safe location. The Liberals cancelled the deal and are now doing nothing.

1630

As critic for children, I was shocked that in the Liberal throne speech no mention is made of supporting autistic

children. Everyone will remember how strongly the Liberal Party condemned the last government for not providing the support the Liberals thought was necessary, but at this time they are, instead, using taxpayer dollars to fight a court case. So you have to ask, what kind of party breaks its promise to those vulnerable children? What is the Minister of Children and Youth Services doing to speak up for children in Ontario? What is the Minister of Culture doing to protect our culture and heritage? The minister for children may be quiet, but the Minister of Culture is completely silent. Ontarians want to know that their representatives in this House and in the cabinet are speaking up for them.

I want to end my time by thanking someone who is making a difference for the children of Ontario. The Lieutenant Governor's book campaign is now up to 1.2 million books and has twinned 100 native schools with Catholic and public schools throughout the province. He deserves our thanks for the work he has done to help literacy for native children. Though I cannot support the motion in favour of the speech from the throne, I wholeheartedly endorse the Lieutenant Governor's campaign for children. I just wish this government would join him.

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean–Carleton):** I'm pleased to follow my friend from York region. She gave a very good speech, as she always does.

The motion on the reply to the speech from the throne really gives you a lot of latitude to talk about issues, not just the ones addressed in the throne speech but, as the member from Hamilton East who spoke earlier mentioned, items that were not in the throne speech.

This summer I saw a young girl I said I would mention in the Legislature. She sent me a picture. This young girl is from Perth, Ontario, and her name is Gracie Froggatt. So Gracie, if you're there, I say hello to you, and thank you for that picture you sent me.

I want to talk about two big issues that are affecting folks in my region. The first one is health care. When it comes to government services or priorities for public expenditure, health care continues to be a huge priority for people, not just in my riding of Nepean–Carleton but in our region and, I think, in the province and probably right across the country. There is a tremendous amount of concern about that. There are concerns in a variety of areas, whether it's the overall system or whether it's the front-line services that they need or they use.

We have a big debate going on in Nepean about the future of the Queensway Carleton Hospital. This hospital sits on federal government land and the federal government is trying to jack up the rent to full market rent on the land. Speaker, you're from Toronto and you would know: What would 50 acres be worth in the middle of Nepean? It's a huge concern that the hospital, as the past chair of the board said, will have to lay off up to 40 nurses or go cap in hand to the provincial government to get the money to pay for it. We've been working hard to try to support the hospital—the federal member, Pierre Poilievre, and I—and he has a motion that will be voted on in the House of Commons in about an hour's time.



I want to publicly thank a number of people for making this a non-partisan issue. The member for Nickel Belt, the New Democrat health critic, is supportive of our campaign to get the federal government to rent the land for \$1 a year. The Minister of Health, whom I spoke to about this and it was clear this was not an issue we were going after him or his government for, has signed our petition. I want to thank him for standing up for the hospital. Of course, if the hospital does have to get the rent, he will have to pony up the money to pay for that. If he ponies up any new money for our hospital, we want them to cut waiting times and we want them to hire more nurses, and not simply send more money to the federal government. I also want to thank the Minister of Health Promotion, Jim Watson, the member for Ottawa West-Nepean, who has supported this issue—it's difficult when there's a bit of a split federally and provincially—and Madeleine Meilleur, the Minister of Culture and also a local member from Ottawa. This is a very important issue. We're awaiting this vote in the House of Commons and hoping they might do the right thing.

I also want to talk about crime. I sit here in the Legislature beside Bob Runciman, a former Solicitor General and someone who has worked very hard on crime issues over the years. I have noticed a huge uptick in the concern level, not just about crime and law and order issues, but about people's personal security in the last six months in Ottawa. It surprised me a great deal. We had a tragedy in my riding—I spoke about it in this House—involving a young woman named Jennifer Teague who went missing and was tragically found dead some 10 days later. This is obviously a huge tragedy for her family and her friends.

I attended a dinner honouring Jennifer and raising funds for victims of violence, a nationwide group that advocates for victims, run by Gary Rosenfeldt and Sharon Rosenfeldt. I had the chance to hear Jennifer's father Ed and stepmother Sylvie speak at this event, and what class and what dignity they brought. This fundraiser was able to raise about \$20,000 to help victims of violence, which was a nice way to honour Jennifer's memory.

Following this tragedy, the real issue that I'm getting from the community, not just in south Nepean and Barrhaven but right across the area, is the need for more police officers, more front-line, uniformed officers on the street. It's something that's tremendously important, because what we're seeing out there is a culture of fear. You may look at the statistics.

The senior whom I talked to in Bayshore this summer, who's afraid to walk four blocks to the Swiss Chalet after dark, isn't in the statistics, but when she's afraid to go out of her house at night, she becomes a victim. I talked to a young student in my riding who's 17 years old and lives in Centrepont. He's been mugged three times. In one of them, he was injured and had to go to the hospital and spend two or three hours there. A young 17-year-old mugged three times in Nepean—that's not the community that I knew growing up, and it's one that causes us a

huge amount of concern. So more officers on the street is something important.

I've talked to the Minister of Community Safety and told him about the concern not just in south Nepean but in the community, about police officers, and I was very pleased. The minister of public security is probably the classiest member of this House. He's a very good guy. He was well aware of the situation in Ottawa. Chief Bevan and his team just arrested a suspect in the Ardeth Wood murder, which happened two years ago. He and his team have done a phenomenal job. The minister was very well aware of the situation in Ottawa. Chief Bevan happened to be here that day, and I was pleased that he was well aware of that issue.

There had been some debate. I talked to the minister and the chief about it—if Ottawa was shortchanged in the last go-round. The minister tells me they weren't, that they got a request and they got all that they applied for, that there wasn't initially enough regional money, city money, for it. The chief has another version of events, but whatever. We can make it better. The city of Ottawa has put in a request for 90 police officers, and the minister says we'll hopefully have some news before Christmas. That's something that's very, very important. We have, in this House, talked about this being announced seven times, but let's get moving on that, because it's a priority for people in our community.

Violent crime: People want more police officers on the street. People also want people who use guns in the commission of violent criminal actions to be put in jail. Daryl Kramp, a federal MP, has a private member's bill—five years minimum, no excuses, no first-time offence. If you use the gun in the commission of an offence, you're going to jail.

I have to say, though, that I sat in amazement today during question period, with the suggestion that if we just spend more money on basketball, that somehow—we've had 44 murders in the city of Toronto?—these violent gang members, these drug dealers, these criminals, are going to put down their arms and go and play basketball, and we'll all hold hands and sing Kumbaya. That's a namby-pamby approach to crime. I don't think it would work.

I did want to mention one thing on the government's agenda. It's on newborn screening. I have a private member's bill before the House—for more than a year now—that was first introduced by the member for Windsor, who's now the finance minister, to call for greater newborn screening. That's something that I hope we'll see more of in this session of the House. The government announced about a month and a half ago that it would follow through, but it just came forward with 19 additional diseases or conditions to be screened for. That would bring us to 21. They left the disease of sickle-cell out. They're looking at it, apparently. I don't want to see this program established without sickle-cell being included. We heard people at committee hearings in September come forward and talk about how important this is.



1640

Ontario's immigration: 75% of the immigration we get comes from areas where this condition is prevalent, not just Africa, but people of Middle Eastern background, people from the Caribbean and people from the Mediterranean area. In Africa, it's one out of 100. In the Caribbean, it's one out of 150. It's particularly important for the black community, not just here in the city of Toronto but for people in Ottawa, and I don't want to see the newborn screening train leave the station without that issue being addressed.

I also wanted briefly to congratulate the government on its response to the Pakistan earthquake. It's not the provincial government's job to get involved in international aid. I think this was very much an exception. This tragedy is so awesome, in a year of so many tragedies, that I think if there were to be an exception made, this was a nice effort. I attended a fundraiser put on by the Pakistani and Muslim community in Nepean not long ago. They raised a considerable amount of money but there is a huge amount of donor fatigue out there, with the tsunami, the situation in the United States, and now in Mexico and Florida.

I also wanted to talk about environmental issues. This was not contained in the throne speech. It's about what would happen if Michigan closes its doors to Toronto's garbage. There is huge concern growing in Ottawa and city council that both the Trail Road land facility that's located in my constituency or the private sector facility in Carp will become home for Toronto's garbage. I have tabled a resolution in this House that would require the city of Ottawa council to give its approval. We have been environmentally responsible when it comes to landfill and waste diversion, and I don't want to see that effort go down the drain. That is something we'll hear a terrific amount about in the weeks and months ahead.

I also finally, as did the member for York region, who spoke before me, congratulate the Lieutenant Governor. He got the only standing ovation of the speech, I say to the member from Niagara Centre, for his efforts with respect to literacy in the north and among First Nations. This guy is a class act—I think he would have been a great choice for Governor General of Canada—and I was thrilled. The member for Niagara Centre and I led the applause for him in that effort. It was the best moment of the throne speech and it was a great tribute to him.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Kormos:** I'm pleased to pose questions and make comments on the contribution by Mr. Baird, the member for Nepean—Carleton, who I'm told has been nominated by the riding association of Ottawa West—Nepean to be the candidate for the federal Conservative Party, as distinct from the provincial Progressive Conservative Party, notwithstanding that Mr. Baird has been identified as very much a member of the progressive wing of the federal Conservative Party.

Mr. Baird will serve his constituents well in his new role as federal member of Parliament. I know he won't forget his colleagues at Queen's Park when he's sitting in

Ottawa, that from time to time he may send money because his salary will increase significantly, and in his senior years, when he's collecting a fat pension, I'm sure he will remember each and every one of us. Perhaps when, on occasion, in our own senior years without pensions, we're on the bus to Ottawa—perhaps with one of those seniors' groups touring Ottawa during the tulip season—Mr. Baird, with his pension, may see fit to take us out for a bite, maybe at Dunn's. There is a Dunn's in Ottawa now; there hadn't been a Dunn's for a while. If anything, I envy him the Dunn's restaurant, the smoked meat, that's just two blocks south of Parliament Hill.

I wish Mr. Baird well. I'm sure he will serve his constituents extremely well on Parliament Hill.

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** I want to acknowledge the member from York North, who spoke and is a very gracious person, and I want to acknowledge the member from Nepean—Carleton on his recent maturity in dealing with the debate. He has been known, as you well know, as being one of the more pesky members, with great enthusiasm and thunderous hyperbole. But I truly appreciate his comments this afternoon on what he identified as being important. I think he made his case well. I believe the members will take this to heart, and certainly the government will.

One area that I would like to build upon that he identified is crime. As you know, our government recently has responded specifically to situations in Toronto, although there has been a commitment that goes beyond simply the environs of Toronto. He identified the area of basketball, as if somehow that was what some people thought was the only solution. I would just like to elaborate on this thought because it has been brought up a few times. There is good, solid social research that shows that for certain communities that lacked recreational opportunities and had been provided with new opportunities of involvement and participation, this has played a significant role in the reduction of youth crime, in the reduction of youth offenders—and it's not just recreation. I think there has to be opportunity for job creation, for training, for people feeling that they have an opportunity to do that.

I'm not the type that suggests we should simply throw someone in prison, lock them up and throw the key away. If that were the case and that was the solution, the United States would have the greatest, or the lowest, crime rate of all because they have 10 times—

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo—Wellington):** I'm glad to have a chance to respond briefly to the comments by the member for York North and the member for Nepean—Carleton, who are sharing the available time in response to the speech from the throne. Everyone in the House is aware that the member for Nepean—Carleton, when the federal election is called, will be departing to run for a seat in the federal House of Commons. I know that he knows he has my best wishes, and I'm hopeful to have the chance to get up to his riding and give him a hand during the course of that election campaign. He has been



a very, very effective member of our caucus, one of our leading lights, one of our pillars, and we're going to miss him very much when he leaves. But at the same time he has done a very effective job in recent months. While being a nominated candidate and preparing for the election, he has, at the same time, discharged his responsibilities as an MPP in a very admirable manner. He served as Minister of Energy in our government and, I think, as the Minister of Community and Social Services for a time, and minister responsible for francophone affairs. In all of those responsibilities he comported himself with a degree of professionalism and dignity that will be, I think, very much appreciated by the House of Commons when he goes to serve there.

His comments on youth crime were very pertinent today. Certainly this has been a top-of-mind issue in Ontario in recent months. The level of crime in Toronto has been a serious problem. The government has recently seen fit to want to appear to respond in a meaningful way, but I think we have seen from the Liberal government in the past an unwillingness to address some of the root causes and an unwillingness to take the tough measures that are required to ensure that the streets in our communities across the province will be made safe once again. I would hope that the government will follow through on some of the rhetoric we heard this week from the Attorney General, but I must say that I am doubtful, given their past record on that particular issue.

**Ms. Horwath:** It's my pleasure to make some remarks on the discussion by the members from York North and Nepean–Carleton on the throne speech. I have to say that they both reflected on some of the unsolved mysteries in Ontario that the throne speech hasn't in any way addressed. That's a similar theme, although with different specifics, that members of the NDP caucus are raising in our criticisms of the throne speech.

The throne speech I think is something that not only needs to be criticized for what's in it, but significantly criticized for what ain't in it, and that's the crux of the matter from our perspective. There's a lot lacking in the throne speech. There's a lack of vision, in my humble opinion. There's a lack of understanding of the reality facing Ontario families, facing the ordinary people of Ontario. Their issues and concerns are falling on deaf ears apparently. If they're not falling on deaf ears, then it would take some convincing by government members to tell me how they're not falling on deaf ears, because the throne speech unfortunately doesn't do what some of these members talked about.

1650

I can just take one example. Earlier, one of the members on the government side was talking about all the great things that are happening, with a reduction of wait lists in the health care sector. Interestingly enough, the government unveiled their big announcement on their wait list reporting only to find out that half of the hospitals in Ontario aren't even sending the data that need to be inputted into the system to ensure that those wait lists are being appropriately reflected. So even their one, small health care change has been a dismal failure.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Nepean–Carleton has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Baird:** Before I respond, I want to say that this guy, the member for Beaches–East York, got up the other day and demanded that a by-election be called in Rouge River, and the government retreated into defeat and yielded to his call. That expeditious manner is a rare success.

I want to thank the members for Niagara Centre, Ottawa Centre, Waterloo–Wellington and Hamilton East.

I agreed with the member for Hamilton East when she talked about the lunch-bag letdown when it came to the throne speech.

The member for Waterloo–Wellington talked about the crime rate. I really do think there's a lot of wisdom out there. I don't deny—and I appreciate the member's comments. I may be mellowing in my old age. I'm still pesky some days; I'm just going after different people, perhaps.

The member for Ottawa Centre has done a lot in his life, professionally and personally, with respect to young people and whatnot, and I support it all—no problem at all—but we cannot for a moment think that's enough. I firmly believe that if we've got people out there who are repeat sexual predators, send them to jail for a long time. There's a lot of wisdom out there among the general public that I think is sometimes lost on politicians.

*Interruption.*

**Mr. Baird:** That's the first time I've ever had cheering from the gallery. I've given many speeches which have elicited responses from the gallery, I say to the member for Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Kormos:** I encourage that kind of applause.

**Mr. Baird:** I say to the member for Niagara Centre with respect to the parliamentary pension, I think it will be a reach to suspect that I would get elected not once but two or three times. I think the riding I'm running in has not ever re-elected a Conservative in the modern age, let alone two or three times.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to the rest of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Mr. Kormos:** I think the current member for Nepean–Carleton is far too humble. He displays a humility that we've not seen before when he suggests that there will be anything formidable, any insurmountable hurdles or anything akin to insurmountable in him being elected in Ottawa West–Nepean. Mind you, I'm encouraging New Democrats in Ottawa West–Nepean to vote for the New Democratic Party candidate.

**Mr. Baird:** Marlene Riviere.

**Mr. Kormos:** Ms. Riviere.

**Mr. Baird:** OPSEU president at the Royal Ottawa.

**Mr. Kormos:** OPSEU president—very laudable.

I look at the reality of the numbers, the location and the profile of that riding and, as I say, there's going to be a good New Democrat running, there's going to be a good Conservative running, and may the most successful person of the two be elected.



Having said that, it came to us that depending upon what happens over the course of the balance of this week in Ottawa—think about this—this could well have been Mr. Baird's last speech in this chamber. I know he's a little choked up about it. I've not seen that side of Mr. Baird. I find it touching that he can display the softer part of John Baird, really. It's the emotional part of John Baird. It's the part of John Baird that will appeal to more than a few voters in Ottawa West—Nepean. But I tell you, it's joined with a person who has significant political experience and who I say will make the next Prime Minister's life hell in Ottawa, regardless of which party that Prime Minister belongs to.

I'm not particularly impressed with the federal question period, I'm really not, and I know Mr. Baird disagrees with me. I've watched it from time to time, and I think our question period can be far more effective than Ottawa's. But I will actually be tuning in from time to time, not on cable, because you know I'm not a fan of cable television. I encourage people to drop cable and get satellite.

**Mr. Fonseca:** John Tory wouldn't like that.

**Mr. Kormos:** Well, the cable companies have certainly disappointed Ontarians when it comes to their promise to include community content, haven't they? It's been nothing but token community content in order to comply with CRTC licensing. To boot, the product they deliver isn't particularly impressive either. Having said that, I want to speak to a particular element of the throne speech.

Folks know full well that the Chicken Farmers of Ontario were here at Queen's Park today. We in the New Democratic Party, with great pleasure, met with Paul Karges, Bill Woods and Adrian Rehorst of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario. This is a lobby. In fact, they're hosting a chicken wing event downstairs in the cafeteria during the supper hour this evening.

**Interjection:** Committee room 2.

**Mr. Kormos:** It's in committee room 2, which will be the cafeteria for the moment.

One of the things that the chicken farmers expressed interest in, as did I, in the throne speech was the proposition in the area that dealt with agriculture, or purported to: "Marketing Ontario food: Your government will work with the industry to develop a new branding and marketing strategy."

Indeed, it was only a week ago that Ms. Wynne, the member for Don Valley West, introduced her resolution in this House, which was supported by everyone, that talked about the expansion of the Foodland Ontario program, again, specifically for the purpose of promoting Ontario food. Chicken farmers, you see, suffer from the significantly high levels of chicken that the federal government allows to be imported as part and parcel of any number of trade agreements, and I endorse and applaud a program which allows any one of us in the province of Ontario, as consumers, to identify Ontario product and use that as part of our criteria for purchasing that product over a non-Ontario product.

In the case of chicken, it's particularly relevant, because we have, as we're told by the chicken farmers, the highest standards for the production of chicken for consumption. We have farmers who are committed to disease control, who have adopted all sorts of protocols to control disease to ensure that the product they're producing is the safest, most quality product that the Ontario consumer could ever get. What we learned today is that it's the chopped-up stuff, the "open the package and you're not really sure what it is" stuff that tends to be imported. We're told that most of the chicken that one buys in Ontario that's in whole pieces—even, dare one eat it, the nine-piece bucket at KFC—is probably Ontario chicken. It's once you get into the processed stuff, the mushy stuff, the indefinable stuff, the stuff you probably shouldn't be eating anyway, that you've got the imported product. The problem is that we just can't be sure how that chicken was raised, we can't be sure about the level of antibiotics and growth hormones that were incorporated into that chicken's diet during the course of its being raised, and we were cautioned today about that by chicken farmers.

1700

My concern is this—and I told the chicken farmers that unless they put real pressure on this government, this Foodland Ontario, this new branding and marketing strategy, is going to consist of little more than some magazine and newspaper ads and some banners in supermarkets.

Look at what this government has done to grape growers in Ontario, amongst other places, down where I come from in Niagara, where grape growers and advocates of Ontario produce have been pleading with this government, year in, year out, to ensure that only 100% Ontario grape product is marketed as Ontario wine, and that's notwithstanding the VQA label, which in and of itself does little by way of consumer knowledge about what "VQA" means in terms of 100% Ontario wine.

This government actually lowered the requirement for Ontario grape content in wine that is marketed as Ontario wine. How was it marketed as Ontario wine and still is? By God, in the liquor store over the weekend, there it is, the Ontario wine shelf, and there's the plonk, with imported garbage in it from any number of places, side by side with VQA wine on the Ontario-labelled shelf. That is misleading to consumers. That is a fraud upon consumers. That is a serious injustice to hard-working Ontario grape growers, whether they're in Niagara, whether they're out along the north shore of Lake Erie down toward Pelee Island or whether they're up where Richard Johnston and a small group of highly specialized boutique grape growers and winemakers are, up Bay of Quinte area, producing wine.

So I'm not very comforted by the mere observation in the throne speech that there's going to be a branding and marketing strategy when I see how the government has betrayed grape growers in Ontario.

I say this—and I put it to the chicken farmers—there should be clear labelling of product that is 100% Ontario



food product, and that includes chicken. It includes, quite frankly, beef; it includes anything else that farmers are producing or growing here in the province of Ontario, and that anything that isn't 100% Ontario product, that's even 5% foreign content—you see, the reason why we were told there's the drive to import foreign chicken is because inevitably it's cheaper. Supermarkets, we're told, presumably—and I don't know whether Loblaw's Mr. Galen Weston is among them—have import licences that are historical, that allow them to import certain quantities of chicken.

I say to this government that the throne speech promise of a branding and marketing strategy for Ontario food should have, as its fundamental prerequisite, the assurance that anything that's called "Ontario chicken," "Ontario apple juice," "Ontario tomato juice," "Ontario peach juice," "Ontario anything," should be 100% Ontario product, without one bit of non-Ontario product. That's what promoting Ontario farmers' efforts amounts to.

When is this government going to respond to the need to ensure that non-Ontario wine—oh, "cellared in Ontario" or "cellared in Canada," rather, which is what the label says, doesn't even imply fermented in Canada; it means what's happened, more often than not, is that grape juice is fermented on its way from Chile as it travels through the Panama Canal, and by the time it reaches Toronto harbour, it's some of the most horrible, acidic, fermented stuff that the big ones, people like Vincor and Andrés, because they're the two biggest utilizers of foreign grape content, then try to pass off in a not-so-subtle way as Ontario wine.

New Democrats told chicken farmers that we will stand with them. We'll stand with any farmer, because, look, unless we can help farmers persuade Ontario consumers that it's in their interest to buy and eat Ontario produce, whether it's beef, pork, lamb or chicken, then we're betraying those same farmers whom we call upon to perform stewardship over agricultural land here in the province of Ontario.

I've got a whole lot of chicken farmers down in Niagara region. These are pretty hard-working people. These are some young people. Some of the youngest farmers who are in the chicken farming industry made significant investments, worked really hard to deliver a quality product and feel, in my view, undermined by governments—federal and provincial—that won't help them promote their product as a distinctively Ontario product and one that warrants being purchased as first choice over other product, not just because it's made in Ontario, not just because of some sense of commitment to our neighbours—not that we shouldn't have this—but because it's actually inherently a better product because of the incredibly high standards that Ontario food producers abide by.

The throne speech, in the broadest sense: I told you before, I was sitting right here, Speaker. You were sitting up there right behind me. We were looking at Liberal backbenchers squarely, dead-on, and you never saw such a sombre group in your life. You'd think the parakeet had

just died. You'd think the dog had just run away. Not only was it unenthusiastic down here on the green carpet, but do you remember there was a day when you'd fill the visitors' galleries for the throne speech? Remember when there used to be standing room only for a throne speech? You can't even give tickets away to a throne speech now. I'm walking up and down Yonge Street, I'm grabbing people by the seat: "Do you want a ticket to the throne speech?" They'd say, "Is it McGuinty's throne speech?" I'd say yes. "Nah, not today."

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Were you scalping them?

**Mr. Kormos:** I was giving the darn things away. I started putting a \$5 bill in my hand with the throne speech ticket; people still wouldn't take it. I put a \$20 bill in my hand with the throne speech ticket; people were still telling me to pass on, get away from them and don't bother them. A McGuinty throne speech—not interested.

But not only was the public not interested, McGuinty's own backbenchers weren't interested. You never saw more faraway looks in your life. You never saw more blank looks on the faces of people who were clearly thinking and daydreaming about things totally unattached and unrelated to what was going on in this chamber. And the lack of enthusiasm—not only had nobody brought out their pom-poms, but nobody was cheerleading, never mind cheering. You couldn't generate a round of applause.

Mr. Baird told you it was the Lieutenant Governor who got the only round of applause, the interrupting of his speech—and well deserved. I gave Baird an elbow—I don't know whether he started it or I, but we agreed that the Lieutenant Governor deserved a standing ovation because of the work he has done and the comments he made—and I said, "Just watch; it will be the only one of the whole afternoon," and it was, wasn't it?

I have watched, listened to and sat through a lot of throne speeches. I have sat through good ones, not so good ones and bad ones. But even in the bad ones, the backbenchers could feign enough enthusiasm so that they could muster up some applause, some modest cheering, even on a bad day. Not a murmur. Whether it was indigestion, whether it was some bad pizza for lunch, I have no idea, but you never saw such a sombre group, downright sullen, moody, not even temperamental to the point of displaying anger, but just a bland response to a bland throne speech. It was remarkable.

There were people nodding off in the group of visitors here. I saw people tugging on other people's sleeves, jerking them awake. You could hear the soft snoring of people who had actually fallen asleep. You could hear the soft rustle of snoring by people who had actually fallen asleep.

The Lieutenant Governor—God bless him. We are truly fans of his, and I say this in all seriousness, but that was probably the toughest day of his career as Lieutenant Governor here in Ontario, because once he got through the first 10 minutes or so, where he talked about some of the great things he has been able to do, the rest of it—I can't read minds but sometimes you get a pretty good idea. Do you know what I mean? You just read the body



language and sort of read the tone. It's just one of those things, as you accumulate years in life, you get a knack for doing it. If there was one of those MAD Magazine bubbles above the Lieutenant Governor's head, what he's saying and what he's really thinking, he'd be going, "My God, this is tepid, pappy stuff," because that's what he was really thinking. Do you remember MAD Magazine? The pages know MAD Magazine, right? It's what the guy is really saying, and then what he's really thinking. Nothing has changed much in 40 years. Everything old is new again.

1710

**Mr. Baird:** It was kind of debasing for him to have to do the money-back-guarantee thing.

**Mr. Kormos:** Then; oh, yes. Look, the Lieutenant Governor is a great guy. He earns every penny of a relatively modest salary. He ain't no Adrienne Clarkson, I'll tell you that. No, I mean she can spend money. She's something else—Adrienne and her friends. Mr. Bartleman doesn't make a big salary, and there he is. He's actually got to come up with a Canadian Shopping Channel line. It's like a Pizza Pizza ad. It's like something you see at 2 o'clock in the morning, when you can't sleep too well and you're watching obscure cable channels. That Her Majesty's representative should have been subjected to this indignity should tear at the heart of every monarchist in this province. To force Her Majesty's representative—to force him—to impose such poor taste on him, to make him utter language that is far more appropriate to the Canadian Shopping Channel, to make His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor—

**The Acting Speaker:** A point of order from the member from Mississauga West?

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I quote from standing order 23(1), which forbids members from speaking "disrespectfully of Her Majesty or any of the royal family, or the Governor-General, or any administrator of Canada, or the Lieutenant Governor."

**The Acting Speaker:** The member has raised a point of order, but I did not hear any disrespect intended in the statements. If the member can point me to where the disrespect was actually stated—I did not hear disrespect to Her Majesty or the Lieutenant Governor.

**Mr. Delaney:** To impute that a representative of the crown was bored or in any other way disturbed by the speech from the throne may be disrespectful, and I submit that for your judgment.

**Mr. Baird:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I was wondering if you might reset the clock so that I might enjoy what could be the last speech I hear the member from Niagara Centre give.

**The Acting Speaker:** I will be a little lenient if he wants, but we're still dealing with the point of order. The point of order has been made but I do not see the disrespect to which the member alludes. The member can continue the speech. Reset the clock for one minute and a half.

**Mr. Kormos:** I seem to be the only person in this chamber who's concerned about the dignity of her

Majesty and her representative here, the Lieutenant Governor. I'm expressing concern for the dignity of the Lieutenant Governor. The throne speech was authored in such a way that he has to stand up there and say, "Your money back; your money refunded if you don't get it in 15 days." That reminds me of the world's three greatest promises: "The cheque is in the mail; your money cheerfully refunded," and, "Hi, I'm from the government and I'm here to help you."

I say to you, Speaker, that I find it amazing that I'm the only one so far who has come to the defence of Her Majesty and her representative the Lieutenant Governor. If anything showed disdain and disregard for that important office, it was knowing full well that the Lieutenant Governor was going to fulfill his responsibilities to read the throne speech and then writing one that smacked of hucksterism, that smacked of the language that's more familiar to carnival barkers than it is to throne speeches: "Your money back if you don't get your birth certificate in 15 days." People don't want their money back. They're prepared to pay for the birth certificate. They just want the birth certificate. The question that remains to be asked is—fair enough, "Your money back if you don't get your birth certificate in 15 days." But I predict that it will take two years to get your money back, and you'll have to call your MPP's office three times before that happens.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** I'm very pleased to respond to the member from Niagara Centre. I want to congratulate the member for Niagara Centre for making reference to the agricultural component of the throne speech. I thank you for that.

I also would like to thank the member for meeting with the chicken farmers today, and just so the member understands, he has 12 chicken farms in his riding, which I'm sure he was very much aware of, but I thank you for taking the time and meeting one of my chicken farmers, Adrian. I'm sure he kept you very well informed.

I would like to add a comment from the OFA, as the member has chosen to speak to the agricultural component. I quote from Ron Bonnett, the president of the OFA: "The recent speech from the throne—the McGuinty government's road map to the future—offered hope in a number of areas for Ontario agriculture....

"The speech listed three priorities for agriculture—innovation to support research and development, marketing Ontario food products, and improved levels of farm income based on new risk management and production insurance programs."

I want to thank the member once again for raising the awareness of the agricultural community, and we know that with your support we will continue to make the agricultural community even stronger by not only buying Ontario, but certainly by a raised level of understanding of what our rural communities can do, which was certainly reflected in the throne speech. So we thank the member for the support for the throne speech.

**Mr. Baird:** I appreciated the speech by the member for Niagara Centre, as I always do. As the member



opposite has indicated, he has 12 chicken farms in his riding. In my constituency, we're more dairy and corn and soybeans. I don't think we have any chicken farms in Nepean-Carleton, to my knowledge, but I know the member is a strong supporter of the agricultural sector.

I couldn't agree more with him, though, when he talked about the debasing of—

**Mr. Kormos:** Humiliation.

**Mr. Baird:** He says the "humiliation" of His Honour in having to talk about these lines that would be more likely coming from Mel Lastman's son in a television commercial where he wears the con outfit. So the hucksterism and carnival barking, as the member talked about, was regrettable, and it was a sad day. That type of stunt would make Mike Harris and his communications people blush. They never went to that level.

I found his comments on the wine industry to be quite interesting. I, too, find it a real concern that the government has approved a regulation to have Ontario wine labelled "made in Ontario" with as little as 1% of the grapes being from Ontario. I understand the real, short-term considerations that the industry is facing this year, but I think it could do serious, long-term damage to the wine industry. If people are drinking what amounts to grape juice from Chile, with maybe a few drops of Ontario—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Baird:** I'm saying you brought in a regulation saying you could have 99% Chilean grape juice in a bottle labelled Ontario wine. You don't even know that, that's the disgraceful part, but thank goodness the member from Niagara Centre is here pointing this out and standing up for his constituents. It was a terrific speech, and I look forward to many more. I look forward, when he comes to Ottawa, to taking him out for a smoked meat sandwich.

**Ms. Horwath:** Unfortunately I think the member from Nepean-Carleton is not going to be able to be here to hear many more of Peter Kormos's speeches, at least not in person. Certainly I know he'll be in tune on the Ontario legislative channel, finding out exactly what's happening, or maybe not happening, in the province of Ontario.

I'm pleased, actually, as well, that the member from Niagara Centre spent some time on some of the local economic issues that really make a difference in communities across the province. It's interesting to note that in the throne speech the government spent a lot of time talking about economic this and economic that, but when you talk to any one of these sectors, many of them are very concerned about what's happening in Ontario.

1720

Interestingly enough, another big piece of the government's self-congratulatory framework is around the health care sector. I just came from a little meeting that is happening downstairs in the dining room. It's a gathering of registered practical nurses of Ontario. They are there to educate the MPPs on what is happening in the health care sector on the front lines. I think these members, as

they go around talking about all their massive accomplishments, need to actually sit down and listen to some of those registered practical nurses of Ontario and hear what they have to say about what's really happening in the health care system, and what they are talking about in terms of lack of real patient care, lack of real attention to the needs of patients in Ontario, real concern about the hurry-up way people are shoved out the door of hospitals, not given enough time to heal and get well and thereby ending up back in hospital weeks down the road when they discover their healing process isn't working out, and it isn't working out because they were quickly kicked out the door.

This is a big problem that's occurring in the health care system. Maybe the government should take some time to fix that problem.

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I'm pleased to have a few moments to speak about the throne speech. It seems that in the last few moments persons have wanted to speak about agriculture, which is very close to me, as you would know, Mr. Speaker.

I had an opportunity today to meet with grain and oilseed producers. Many of them are completing their harvest this year. They are coming and wanting to talk about their situation. I also met with chicken producers at noon hour today, and talked to them about their industry and how things are doing with them. It's always a pleasure to meet people from the rural community here at Queen's Park. I meet them on a regular basis in my riding, of course, on the streets, in the stores and at my office as an MPP.

They were pleased that our government, through the throne speech, mentioned agriculture. They were very pleased to know that we talked about the support in the past and the support we hope to give to agriculture in the future. I know they were pleased about it because they mentioned to me that in the two previous throne speeches by the then Conservative government, agriculture was never mentioned. So they were pleased that they are on the radar screen with the McGuinty government and with the new minister, that our rural caucus and our urban caucus as well appreciate and understand that agriculture, being the second most prolific industry in Ontario, needs to have the support of their government.

Through those enunciations in the throne speech, it was relayed to the broader agriculture community—agribusiness, some of our universities and colleges that deliver programs in an agricultural way—that we are here to assist them into the future, because we know how important the agriculture business is to all our communities, urban and rural.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Niagara Centre has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Kormos:** We're going to be back tonight. Tonight we're going to be talking about Bill 169. We are going to be talking about the shafting that particularly the Toronto taxicab drivers are going to be getting from the Liberals here at Queen's Park. Boy, they're going to be run over, rolled over, driven over. They're going to be



dragged sideways behind speeding limos from Pearson airport. The taxi drivers are going to take a beating from the Liberals at Queen's Park.

They're as mad as all get-out; they're mad as all Hades. You heard them circling Queen's Park just last week—at least you had no trouble getting a cab—horns honking, because they're getting it done to them by the Liberals at Queen's Park.

So we're going to be debating that bill. The regrettable thing about Bill 169 is that there are some things in Bill 169 that every member of this assembly supports. But there is the incredible attack on taxicab drivers. Those guys work hard. They work a dangerous job. They work in the coldest of weather, the muckiest of weather, and here it is: This government is handing over their livelihood to limo drivers who have the monopoly at Pearson for taking people from Pearson airport. So this government has opened the door and given a carte blanche to the limo drivers in their Lincoln Town Cars, their Mercedes-Benz S600s and their Cadillac DeVilles. This government's giving carte blanche to the Lincoln Town Car, Cadillac and Mercedes-Benz limo crowd to scoop taxi fares at hotels in Toronto, yet at the same time denies any reciprocal power for cab drivers. New Democrats say that what's good for the goose is good for the gander. It's a shame that the Liberals wouldn't give taxicab drivers a similar right to work in their area in the city of Toronto as they've given limo drivers to work at Pearson airport.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I'll be sharing my time with the member from Mississauga West.

As I was growing up, Mum would often offer advice. One thing she said to me was that the most important journey any of us could travel was what she called the one-foot journey—the distance from the head to the heart. I was thinking of that the other day as I was listening to the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey respond to the throne speech. I listened very carefully, because I believe the Leader of the Opposition to be a man of substance and quite impressive in the way he presents himself. Certainly the rhetoric was there. But as interested as I was in listening, I became very concerned with the general tenor of the sharing. Perhaps it's to be expected in this place—roles and what have you—but his general tenor was that the government on this side simply can't be trusted. In that regard, I think he was quite optophobic. Optophobia, of course, is the fear of opening one's eyes. In that context, I think his comments were certainly unfortunate and, in many instances, unfair.

Why do I say that? It's because our present circumstances, if nothing else, are a reflection of past choices, just as current choices will be a reflection of our future circumstances. It's been said that politicians campaign in poetry and govern in prose. I think that's true. In that context, I want to add my own personal observation: I think good government is about closing the gap between the poetry and the prose, and that's not always an easy thing to do.

I was particularly struck with the emphasis that the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey seemed to place on broken promises. I say that because I think there's fairly ample evidence that when the previous government was in power, they suffered from attention deficit disorder. In fact, I think there's a huge difference between a broken promise and breaking the public trust. Of course, I am talking about the almost \$6-billion deficit that we found. As I listened to the comments, I got to thinking, it's interesting to hear all this stuff about broken promises. I want to say, by the way, that had that \$6 billion been there, we could have been doing a lot more, and a lot more quickly, and we certainly would have. That's the simple truth.

The previous government made commitments just before and during the election campaign to open 18 new hospitals, but there was no money allocated for that. The Leader of the Opposition made reference to the debt being equal to what we spend in education, but he made no reference to the fact that next to the New Democrats, the previous government added more to the provincial debt than any other party in Ontario history. He talked about the Who Does What relationship with municipalities, without ever mentioning that the Who Does What task force was a previous government initiative. They got the best advice they could get that money could buy before completely ignoring it.

1730

They talked about tuition fees and the like, without ever acknowledging that under their tenure, tuition fees went up 50%. Then, to top it all off, there was some reference to Soviet-style, centralized, controlled health care. My goodness. What could be further from the truth, with this government's emphasis on the development of local health integration networks?

By the way, my community council, which meets regularly in the great riding of ADFA, commented that they thought that was the single best and most enlightened transformation that our government was launching.

Now, we know that while certain arguments and issues are, from time to time, recycled in this place, there's one thing that we can't recycle, and that's wasted time. So we're getting at it as best we can, and we've come to government with some new understandings: We understand that there's a big difference between knowing what is best and bringing out the best. We understand that we need to work with people rather than pitting neighbour against neighbour. Why? Because the best way to move forward is to listen, to learn and then to act. So we've established a consultative milieu here at Queen's Park and, more importantly, throughout Ontario, unlike the previous government, that is helping us to move forward in prudent and pragmatic ways.

We also understand that policy must be pragmatic, directed by reason, supported by principle and designed to achieve the greatest good. We know that great things are done not by impulse but by a series of good things that are brought together. It's like a puzzle that has to fit together.



We also know that action is a restorer of confidence. We've seen a lot of inaction, the result caused by fear, but action is the restorer of confidence. That's why we've been moving forward in some of the areas that were so optimistically shared in the throne speech: post-secondary education; ending the educational chaos; replacing the barriers and the riot police with some peace and stability in this province; recruiting specialized teachers; more textbooks; enhanced community use of schools; 1,300 new high-school teachers; more English-as-a-second-language funding; acknowledging that test scores, for the first time in a long time in our public schools, are going up; and 25,000 new child care spaces being provided.

On the post-secondary front, we're making the largest investment in post-secondary education in the last 44 years. I've got to just share quickly that when we made that announcement about post-secondary education—as you know, we're not to make comments from the gallery. There was a comment from the west gallery there, and I looked up, thinking to myself, “What sort of foolish person is up there making that comment?” You know who it was? It was former Premier Bill Davis. He was on his feet, applauding Premier Dalton McGuinty's Reaching Higher initiative for implementing a report written by a former NDP Premier, Bob Rae. I thought, what interesting days. I went home optimistic that day, that maybe there was still the odd instance where we could transcend narrow, partisan ideologies and actually work together for the greater good.

On the health front, we have 80 new health care teams out there. We're going to graduate 23% more doctors. We're going to increase CAT scans by 8%, cancer surgeries by 11%, cataract surgeries by 16%, cardiac procedures by 17%, hip and joint replacements by 28%. There are 3,000 new nurses, new long-term-care funding for our vulnerable seniors, and a new emphasis on prevention with the creation of the new ministry.

Some may say that's nothing, that it's inconsequential, that there's nothing at all there in the budget, but I want to tell you, a combination of post-secondary education and health care transformation, coupled with our commitment to strengthening relationships with municipalities through a new City of Toronto Act—that's meaningless, I assume—and gas tax being shared with municipalities for the first time. This is the first government in Canada to do that. There is the creation of a new Greater Toronto Transit Authority and, to top all that off, a commitment to unparalleled transparency with respect to fiscal issues.

I want to say in the last few seconds I have that it's clear to me—and yes, I'm biased; after so many years of watching what's been happening on the other side, it's hard not to be—that hope is on the way. We're doing more than keeping a wet index finger in the air, trying to see which way the wind is blowing. We're trying to be real wind-changers in Ontario.

**Mr. Delaney:** A new speech from the throne is both a time for a government to refocus its agenda and to celebrate what progress the government has made. I'm

pleased to stand here, representing the Mississauga West communities of Streetsville, Meadowvale, Lisgar, Erin Mills and Churchill Meadows. I bring a special greeting to the brand new development of Churchill South, a neighbourhood that Andrea and I are now pleased to call home.

The government that the people of Mississauga helped elect sent me and five other MPPs, all Liberals, here to the Ontario Legislature to make a difference. We came to make a difference for all Ontarians and especially to bring local active and responsive representation to the 680,000 people in fast-growing Mississauga.

I want to acknowledge the driving force that has towered over our city of Mississauga since its inception as a city. Earlier this year, our dynamic mayor, Hazel McCallion, was named to the Order of Canada. Here in this Legislature let me say, Madam Mayor, that we are all very proud of you and we all celebrate your elevation to the Order of Canada.

Let me also acknowledge Mississauga's Citizen of the Year, Jake Dheer, who is our Rogers Cable TV station manager. I will recognize Jake in this House in more detail next month. Let me also acknowledge another leader in our city, our newspaper editor, Steve Pecar, who serves as a volunteer in the host program at Intercultural Neighbourhood Social Services. By their leadership, these two people typify the many thousands of Mississauga people who serve their community and who help build their community as volunteers day to day.

Mississauga's people have worked together to create Ontario's third-largest city, a city that is home to 50 of Canada's Fortune 500 companies. Our government's throne speech outlines many of the things Mississauga can celebrate because of the work our Mississauga MPPs have done and the work our government has done. Each year some 20,000 people make Mississauga their new home. Many of those move into the western Mississauga area that I represent. For years, people in western Mississauga have appealed to Queen's Park to help them build lives, careers and communities. Those needs fell on deaf ears for 13 long years, but how quickly times have changed. Since 2003, we've opened three new elementary schools in Mississauga West, and we have two new high schools nearing completion to serve the new families moving into Lisgar and Churchill Meadows.

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to announce funds to help our public and Catholic schools upgrade old buildings. I visited Vista Heights, a school built nearly 50 years ago, and asked a group of grade 5 students what part of their school needed improvement most. The first thing the students cried out was, “Girls' bathroom,” and that was followed by the gymnasium and the library, and they are going to get their wish.

Our 2005 budget laid out a historic \$6.2-billion multi-year investment in post-secondary education. That was music to the cultivated ears of Ian Orchard, principal of the University of Toronto at Mississauga, which we call Erindale College. It also delighted the young men and women who aspire to knowledge-intensive careers.



Our fellow Canadians in Alberta are building their future on the natural resources in the Athabasca tar sands, which now rank as among the world's best oil reserves. Ontario is building its future on the natural talent, brain power, work ethic and entrepreneurial drive of the men and women in Ontario. Post-secondary education builds the talent pool of tomorrow's managers, entrepreneurs, professionals, scientists and risk takers. Our throne speech reaffirms this commitment. Unlike fossil fuels, Ontario's brainpower is a renewable resource.

1740

People in Mississauga need to get around—get around from where they live to where they work or where they do business—and if you're from Mississauga, boy, do you know all about gridlock and traffic. That's why the government of Ontario has stepped in and done something. Some \$1 billion worth of work is underway right now on Peel's provincial roads alone. Earlier this year, after bringing the needs of our commuters to this Legislature with my petitions, the Minister of Transportation and I were able to announce a new GO train station to be built in Lisgar. Two weeks ago, I met with the executive of the Lisgar Residents' Association. We reviewed the design proposals from GO Transit, and we all liked the red brick, peak roof, traditional-looking train station. Lisgar station, located where 10th Line crosses the tracks, will be the first new GO rail station in Mississauga in 25 years, and, Mississauga West, we got it. Our new Lisgar station will open in 2007, and construction will be underway early next spring. It will look very much like a traditional Canadian railway station. It will allow much of the east-west traffic that clogs our roads at Derry, Aquitaine, Battleford, Britannia, Thomas and Eglinton to flow north and will ease our rush-hour traffic congestion.

Our government also listened to the people of Streetsville, who told me that for the last few GO trains, a commuter faces a lengthy walk from the back of the parking lot to the station, then to the underpass and only then on to the platform. I spoke with GO Transit. They've been a fine team and a delight to work with. They sent an analyst to assess the situation at Streetsville, and he agreed with me and with Streetsville residents. In response, GO Transit will construct a tunnel near Thomas Street to enable commuters who have their monthly passes or who have purchased tickets to get those tickets cancelled and take a shortcut directly on to the platform. As well, GO trains will soon be 12 cars instead of 10. While this requires the upgrade of GO's fleet of locomotives, this will keep the cars from being "standing room only" after only three stations.

We're not finished with transit yet. Our public infrastructure renewal minister listened again, and a badly needed third track on the Milton GO line is on Ontario's very extensive public infrastructure renewal plan. We need that third track to restore all-day GO service on the Milton line, and we need that third track because CP Rail, its owner, is using it at nearly 100% of its capacity for freight.

Mississauga, this is a government that has listened to you and that is moving ahead on your concerns and helping you to get from where you are to where you need to go, where you need to work and where you need to do business.

Few cities in the world have grown faster than Mississauga, and on my watch as their MPP, no fewer than three long-term-care seniors' residences have opened in Mississauga West because seniors are our fastest-growing demographic. What this means is that our dynamic and fast-growing Mississauga community has also fallen behind in health care. The motto of our Credit Valley Hospital is, "World class, right here." No matter how good our people are—and they are terrific—we are well below the capacity that we need to serve the legitimate needs of our community. Just as one measure, our hospital was built to handle 2,700 births per year, and it handles 5,000. Day after day, we petitioned our government, and our government listened.

On August 22 of this year—coincidentally, my own birthday—the Minister of Public Infrastructure—

**Interjection:** Happy birthday.

**Mr. Delaney:** I knew I shouldn't have said that. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and I stood in front of hundreds of staff and patients at Credit Valley Hospital and announced that phase 2 will break ground in fiscal year 2007-08. It's a tight schedule, and our hospital is working closely with both ministries. We want to get that ceremonial spade in the ground, and we want to get that facility open, and I know I can count on their help and their co-operation.

Minister, on behalf of our community, I've petitioned our government to thank you for your help and your co-operation on phase 2 at Credit Valley Hospital, and I know that I can continue to count on your co-operation.

Finally, our government listened to Mississauga in its ongoing reform of Peel region. We have about 63% of the population of Peel, a proportion that will continue in the coming years, but Mississauga had only 48% of the votes on Peel regional council. Our government brought fairness back to representation on Peel regional council. We stood up for Mississauga. The other parties in this House trashed our city and slagged our mayor. The citizens of Mississauga are going to remember that.

This is a government that has delivered for Mississauga. Our throne speech lays out the blueprint for many more years of partnership with the city, with the businesses that help it grow and with the men, women, students and families in our great city of Mississauga. It's been a pleasure to stand to discuss the speech from the throne, Speaker, and I thank you for your time.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Arnott:** I'm pleased to have a chance to respond to the member for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot and the member for Mississauga West. They've split their time this afternoon so that both of them could make a contribution on behalf of their constituents, and I think both of them gave fine speeches representing the views of the people who reside in their constituencies.



Of course, in this throne speech debate, it is customary that there are almost no limits to the subject under discussion, and as such, I want to also inform the House, as a number of other members have today, that I was pleased to have an opportunity to meet with representatives of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario today in my office and to see their display out front this morning. I'm looking forward to attending their event later on this afternoon and early evening. I am starving; I'm very hungry, and I'm looking forward to eating the chicken wings or whatever else they have for us, and I would certainly encourage all members of the House to avail themselves of that opportunity as well.

I'm looking forward to hearing the speech from the member for Cambridge—he's coming up next for our party—and I want to express support for the issue that he has brought forward in recent days in this Legislature, that being the need for the provincial government to come through with a financial commitment to rebuild and upgrade the Cambridge hospital.

The member for Cambridge has now brought forward this issue on a number of occasions. So far, the Minister of Health, I'm afraid, has been indifferent, at best, to the presentation of the problem and, at worst, dismissive. I would suggest to him that it's important to the needs of the constituents, not only in Cambridge but in Waterloo region, that the necessary work and upgrades at Cambridge hospital be undertaken as soon as possible. I would encourage the government to revisit the issue, to listen to the member for Cambridge and come forward with the commitment that is necessary to ensure that the health care needs of the people of Cambridge are met.

**Ms. Horwath:** I too am pleased to make some comments on the remarks from the member for Mississauga West and the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot, my good friend Ted McMeekin, who is a neighbour of mine, geographically in some ways, and who I had the pleasure of serving on our regional council—that was before amalgamation in our good region, at the time of Hamilton–Wentworth.

I was vigorously looking through this reference book, because it struck me that many of the speakers tonight have been talking about the chicken farmers. And why I was looking through my little reference book here is because it struck me that the reason everybody's all excited about the chicken farmers is, yes, of course they've come and spent some time informing members of this House about their industry and the things they need, but they also provided each member with some memorabilia to remember them by. The reason I thought about it is because my son has a particular term—my son Julian Leonetti, who maybe is watching tonight; hopefully, he's doing some homework—for these bits of memorabilia or gifts to remember these corporations or organizations by, and it's called “schwag.”

So, the chicken farmers provided us with very interesting schwag, including a little chicken stress ball, which, I must admit when I look at the throne speech, I need to use a little bit because it stresses me out that the

throne speech was a bit lacking for the people of Ontario—but also a T-shirt and a little recipe book about how to cook chicken wings and a drinking mug.

I have to say, notwithstanding all of the other extremely important parts about the chicken farmers and the agricultural industry and the province of Ontario generally, those chicken farmers sure know how to put together a good package of schwag for the MPPs.

**1750**

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** I'm happy to comment on the remarks of the members from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot and Mississauga West. I have to say that in Don Valley West, what I hear from my constituents—from my seniors' advisory council, for example—is that they are very happy we're investing in home care. They're very happy we're moving on local health integration networks and trying to graduate more doctors from medical school. The ratepayer groups in my area are eagerly awaiting Ontario Municipal Board reform. They're happy we're moving on a City of Toronto Act. They're really pleased we're investing in transit. On education, the parents' and the teachers' groups that come to talk to me really are very clear that the tone in education has shifted from one of confrontation.

All those groups that come to talk to me acknowledge there's more to do, but they also know that the stated goal of the previous government was to tear down what had been built up in this province for decades. What we're doing is reinvesting in infrastructure and innovation. We are investing in the future of this province in a very responsible way.

I think that's what the member for ADFA, as he calls it, was laying out in response to what our throne speech said: “Here's what we're doing. Here's our plan.” We're not saying that it's all done, that we have accomplished everything we set out to accomplish. We're on the road, however. We've turned the ship around and we're in a positive, building mode in this province. I think that's reflected in the people who come into our constituency offices and say, “OK, you're on the right track. Where are you going next?” That's what the throne speech was about: to point in that future direction. I am happy we have come as far as we have.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** It's interesting that the member would say, “We haven't finished yet.” The people of Ontario would like you to start pretty soon. Stop breaking promises and get on with some of the things you talked about doing. You should start the program pretty soon. It's time. It's been two years. It's over two years into your mandate and it's time to get going on that.

One of the problems with this throne speech was it didn't have a vision. There was no vision of the future in this throne speech. There was nothing. It was a regurgitation of broken promises from the first throne speech. It didn't have a clear vision of what Ontario can be in the future.

Much of your criticism is focused on the past, and I can tell you that in the past the people of Ontario helped



with the policies our government put in place. The people of Ontario created over a million new jobs. There were a million new dreams fulfilled, a million new people who came home and said those four magic words: "I got the job." That's a wonderful way to create a vision for Ontario, an Ontario that is working, instead of killing 42,000 manufacturing jobs with your tax increases and your increased costs of health care and electricity, increased costs every time you turn around. You're killing the incentive. You're killing the ability of small business in Ontario to reinvest in itself, and that's where our productivity is disappearing to. You can no longer afford to reinvest in the new equipment and new technology you need to maintain the productivity growth in which this province has led this country.

You're taking the economic engine of Canada and turning it into a caboose with your increased cost of doing business in this province every time you turn around. Every time you turn around, there's more money to pay out to the government from small businesses, and that's killing this province.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. McMeekin:** On behalf of my colleague from Mississauga West, I want to thank the members from Waterloo–Wellington, Hamilton East, Don Valley West and Halton for their comments.

There's a fresh breeze blowing across Ontario. It's the wind of change, long-delayed change designed to ensure that the food we eat, the air we breathe and the water we drink are safe; change designed to promote innovation and prosperity; to ensure a strong, viable automobile strategy; to create new jobs—in fact 200,000 new jobs to date—and more co-op and apprenticeship programs; change to enhance farm safety nets and to bring added value to agricultural stakeholders; change to restore and maintain stability and civility in our education system; to place a new emphasis on local health care decision-making; to protect our sacred green spaces from senseless urban sprawl; and along the way, to acknowledge and promote greater conservation.

I didn't speak much about the democratic renewal initiatives. We could easily have spent 20 minutes just on those, but I want to say that we're seeing democratic renewal in this place every single day.

I want to close by saying to all the people who may be viewing this that we on this side of the House, and I hope on the other side of the House, want to acknowledge all the local community champions who are prepared every single day to care and share and dare with each one of us to build the stronger, healthier, more caring and sustainable communities we all desire, because the throne speech was for them.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I have the opportunity to speak for three minutes before we join the chicken broilers down in the dining room. Unfortunately, it doesn't leave a lot of time because I'd like to speak

about our hospital. I noted in the throne speech that there was really no mention of capital funding. There was an announcement some months ago in which the McGuinty government announced \$100 billion for capital spending in Ontario, and I thought, boy, that was a pretty impressive number. Unfortunately, if you read down to the second line, the next thing you realize is that that \$100 billion was not over the next five, not 10, not even 15 years; it was over the next 30 years. Now, how can one project a lifetime of spending? That's almost a lifetime.

I get the feeling that they took today's capital funding for this year and said, "We have to come up with a round figure. What would we like—\$25 billion, \$50 billion, \$75 billion, \$100 billion? Boy, that has a ring to it. That is a whole lot of money." So they arrived at that over 30 years. And you know, it worked; that's the strange part. I've watched the newspapers. The headline or the byline—strangely enough, in our newspaper trade, reporters who write the stories do not write the bylines on many occasions. They're written by two different people, and I don't know who writes the bylines. On many occasions I've noted that they really have nothing to do with the story that follows it. However, throughout Ontario, as I followed the story, the byline was: "\$100 Billion for Capital Spending in Ontario." Then later, you find out it was over 30 years.

Our hospital, out of that \$100 billion, seems to be getting absolutely nothing for capital costs, even though in 2002 the Ontario restructuring committee mandated an expansion of this hospital, an expansion of 83 beds, an expansion of the emergency ward, an expansion, for the first time—Cambridge had not had schedule 1 psychiatric beds for individuals who needed care. A project that was approximately \$70 million was, I take it—

**The Acting Speaker:** I'm afraid it is 6 o'clock and I must now put the question.

On October 13, 2005, Mr. Crozier moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session."

On Monday October 17, 2005, Mr. Tory moved that the motion for an address in reply to the speech from the throne be amended by striking out all the words after, "We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session," and replacing them with the following:

"However, the current speech from the throne ignores the real problems faced by real working families throughout Ontario; and



"Whereas, in place of real action for Ontario's families this throne speech offers nothing more than warmed-over old announcements and 'novelty items'; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardship imposed by the new Liberal health tax during an already difficult time; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardships that Ontarians face in paying more for electricity, home heating and vital medical care; and

"Whereas the throne speech continues to neglect the mounting problems of nursing supply, wait-lists or timely access to care; and

"Whereas, based on this Liberal government's broken promises in their first throne speech ... Ontarians have valid reason to doubt the contents of the current one.

"Therefore, I regret to inform His Honour that the current Liberal government has failed to keep its election commitments, failed to listen to the real needs of Ontario families and have instead persisted in unreasonable taxation, undisciplined spending and continued neglect of the real needs of Ontarians. We therefore condemn this government for ignoring the real problems facing real Ontario families and demand immediate action before it's too late."

The first question to be decided is Mr. Tory's amendment to the motion.

All those in favour of Mr. Tory's amendment to the motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

More than five are standing. Please call in the members. There will be a 30-minute bell.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** Unless.

**The Acting Speaker:** Unless—I have just been handed a note to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening session be deferred until Thursday, October 27, 2005." It has been signed by the chief government whip.

Having this notice in hand, and it now being after the hour of 6 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1803.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Boutrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Nouveau démocratique
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement t	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)



Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh Sudbury	Brownell, Jim (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)		<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)		Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)		Mauro, Bill (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thornhill	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)</b> Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b> Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé		Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)</b> Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b> Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto–Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Parkdale–High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)		Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Whitby–Ajax	Zimmer, David (L)
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Willowdale	
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Sarnia–Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)		<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b> Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)		<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)</b> Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)		Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L)</b> Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph (L)</b> Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)</b> Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux	York Centre / York-Centre	
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	York North / York-Nord	
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L)</b> Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	York West / York-Ouest	
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Attorney General / procureur général	Scarborough–Rouge River	Vacant
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

# CONTENTS

Wednesday 26 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Poultry farmers</b>	
Mr. Barrett .....	413
Mrs. Van Bommel .....	415
<b>Peterborough City Soccer Association</b>	
Mr. Leal .....	413
<b>Water quality</b>	
Mr. Miller .....	413
<b>Rockton World's Fair</b>	
Mr. McMeekin .....	414
<b>Hospital funding</b>	
Mr. Martiniuk .....	414
<b>Tuition</b>	
Mr. Marchese .....	414
<b>Academic testing</b>	
Mr. Lalonde .....	414
<b>Health care</b>	
Mr. McNeely .....	415

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

<b>Standing committee on government agencies</b>	
The Speaker .....	415
Report deemed adopted .....	416
<b>Standing committee on regulations and private bills</b>	
Ms. Churley .....	416
Report adopted .....	416

## FIRST READINGS

<b>No Tuition Hikes Act, 2005,</b>	
Bill 12, <i>Mr. Marchese</i>	
Agreed to .....	416
Mr. Marchese .....	416

## MOTIONS

<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	416
Agreed to .....	416

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Economic policy</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	416
Mr. McGuinty .....	416
Mr. Yakubski .....	420
Mr. Cordiano .....	420, 425
Mr. Chudleigh .....	425

## Water quality

Mr. Hampton .....	418
Mr. McGuinty .....	418
Mr. Bisson .....	421
Mr. Ramsay .....	421
Ms. Churley .....	422
Mr. Wilkinson .....	422

## Hospital funding

Mr. Ramal .....	421
Mr. Caplan .....	421

## Vehicle inspection certificates

Mr. Klees .....	422
Mr. Takhar .....	422

## Community use of schools

Mr. Duguid .....	423
Mr. Watson .....	423

## Cancer treatment

Mr. O'Toole .....	423
Mr. Smitherman .....	424

## Minimum wage

Mr. Prue .....	424
Mr. Peters .....	424

## Hydro generation

Mr. Arthurs .....	424
Mrs. Cansfield .....	425

## PETITIONS

### Hospital funding

Mr. Martiniuk .....	426
---------------------	-----

### Cancer treatment

Ms. Martel .....	426
Mr. Jackson .....	427

### Crime prevention

Mr. Berardinetti .....	426
------------------------	-----

### Autism treatment

Mrs. Munro .....	426
------------------	-----

### Pension plans

Ms. Horwath .....	427, 428
Ms. Martel .....	427

### Class size

Mr. Qaadri .....	427
------------------	-----

### Mandatory retirement

Mr. Ruprecht .....	427
Mr. Leal .....	429

### Regional centres for the developmentally disabled

Mr. Dunlop .....	428
------------------	-----

### Animal protection

Ms. Marsales .....	428
--------------------	-----

### Services for the developmentally disabled

Mr. O'Toole .....	428
-------------------	-----

## GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

### Throne speech debate, government

order number 1, *Mr. Crozier*

Ms. Horwath .....	429, 433, 441, 445
	449

Mr. Fonseca .....	432
-------------------	-----

Mr. Chudleigh .....	432, 436, 449
---------------------	---------------

Mr. Kormos .....	432, 436, 440, 441
	445

Mr. Berardinetti .....	433
------------------------	-----

Mr. Ruprecht .....	433, 437
--------------------	----------

Mr. Peterson .....	434
--------------------	-----

Mr. Ramal .....	436
-----------------	-----

Mrs. Munro .....	437
------------------	-----

Mr. Baird .....	438, 441, 444
-----------------	---------------

Mr. Patten .....	440
------------------	-----

Mr. Arnott .....	440, 448
------------------	----------

Mrs. Mitchell .....	444
---------------------	-----

Mr. Hoy .....	445
---------------	-----

Mr. McMeekin .....	446, 450
--------------------	----------

Mr. Delaney .....	447
-------------------	-----

Ms. Wynne .....	449
-----------------	-----

Mr. Martiniuk .....	450
---------------------	-----

Vote deferred .....	451
---------------------	-----

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

## DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Épreuves académiques

M. Lalonde .....	414
------------------	-----

## PREMIÈRE LECTURE

### Loi de 2005 interdisant

l'augmentation des droits de scolarité, projet de loi 12,

*M. Marchese*

Adoptée .....	416
---------------	-----





No. 10B

N° 10B

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 26 October 2005

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

NOV 11 2005

### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.

---

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 26 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE TRANSPORT

Mr. Takhar moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 169, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and to amend and repeal various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters / Projet de loi 169, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et modifiant et abrogeant diverses autres lois à l'égard de questions relatives au transport.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Takhar.

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** I am pleased to lead the debate on this bill for third reading. I will be sharing my time with my very capable and energetic parliamentary assistant, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, Mr. Lalonde. I want to put on the record that it is a real delight and honour for me to work with my parliamentary assistant.

A safe and efficient transportation network is key to Ontario's prosperity and quality of life. Bill 169 contains wide-ranging legislation that, if passed, would make our roads safer. It would also make our transportation system more efficient by encouraging people to use public transit or car pools. Our government is committed to improving travel across the province. We are creating a transit culture where people choose to leave the car at home, and we are making progress to create that very culture.

Let me talk about safety first. Bill 169 would make our roads safer by cracking down on the worst speeders. Drivers who go 30 kilometres an hour over the speed limit on city streets are nearly six times more likely to kill or seriously injure someone. The risk is greater on our highways. Those who drive 50 kilometres an hour over the limit are nearly 10 times more likely to kill or seriously injure someone. You heard it right: 10 times more likely to kill or seriously injure someone.

This bill proposes to increase fines for those who drive 30 to 34 kilometres an hour over the limit. For example, someone travelling 30 kilometres over the posted limit would face a maximum fine of \$210. That is up from the \$135 that is in place right now. It proposes longer licence

suspensions of up to one year for those convicted of repeatedly driving 50 kilometres an hour or more over the posted speed limit. It would double fines for speeding in construction zones when workers are present. For example, anyone caught driving more than 30 kilometres an hour over the posted limit in a construction zone would face a fine of \$420. Drivers who ignore the stop/slow signs held by workers would face a fine of up to \$500. Currently there is no fine for this.

In our cities and towns, drivers who fail to stop for pedestrians at crossovers, crosswalks and school crossings would face stiffer penalties too. The minimum fine would more than double, from \$60 to \$150. This last point is critical for the safety of pedestrians. Nearly half of all pedestrians killed are struck at marked crossings. Sadly, many of them are children or seniors. In Toronto, for example, as of this past weekend, 24 people have died simply trying to cross the street this year. That compares to 16 during the same time last year.

1850

I want to extend my very sincere condolences and sympathy to former cabinet member David Tsubouchi, whose father, Thomas Tsubouchi, was killed this past weekend at a crosswalk—the very circumstance we are trying to eliminate. We simply must do what we can to make our roads safer. That is why I strongly urge all honourable members to support Bill 169.

This bill has the support of municipalities; it has the support of police. Here are some samples of what has been said since I introduced the bill last February. Staff Sergeant Tom Carrique of the York Regional Police said: "Anything we can do to deal with speeding will make our roads safer." The Metroland papers said: "Peel Regional Police are lauding this bill." The Woodstock Sentinel-Review said it's "a step toward pedestrian safety." The Ottawa Citizen said it's the "right move."

Let me tell you about another priority for our government, and that is, easing congestion. One of the best ways to ensure an efficient transportation system is to encourage people to carpool or take public transit. I am proud that we will be the first provincial government to build high-occupancy vehicle lanes on Ontario highways. New lanes are being added to sections of Highways 403 and 404, and we are proposing to limit them to buses and cars with two or more people. Right now, many of the cars travelling on our busiest highways at the busiest times of the day carry only one person, and that is the driver. We need to make better use of our highway space and capacity. Bill 169 would allow HOV lanes to be designated and enforced.



Bill 169 would also allow buses and streetcars across the province to use devices that control stoplights. So-called "go boxes" would allow buses and streetcars to save time by making a green light last a little longer or by shortening a red light. What this does is take people from one place to another easier and quicker, and it saves time.

The bill would also allow police to ticket motorists who try to use bus bypass shoulders. As the name implies, bus bypass shoulders allow local transit vehicles to bypass traffic jams. HOV lanes, bus bypass shoulders and stoplight priority would give transit riders an advantage and make public transit a better choice.

Here is another way the bill, if passed, would ease congestion. The legislation would allow police to clear and reopen highways faster after a collision or spill. Our proposal would clarify removal powers and protect police and the province from liability. This provision also has support from police.

I would like to touch on a proposed amendment to Bill 169. Currently, the Highway Traffic Act prohibits anyone from operating a vehicle on a closed highway. Road service and emergency vehicles are exempt. We are proposing to add an exemption for volunteer firefighters responding to an emergency in their personal vehicles. Volunteers and firefighters who work for a professional fire service would be covered.

Finally, I would like to touch on one more important safety and consumer protection aspect of the bill: taxi scoopers. Unlicensed operators hang around airports and tourist destinations, waiting to take advantage of unsuspecting travelers. One of them tried it on me. Passengers can be hit with fares of \$180 for a trip from an airport to the downtown area. They have been harassed and they have feared for their own safety. It's just not safe.

The bill takes into account the advice of officials at the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, municipal leaders and law enforcement agencies from a number of communities such as Ottawa, Niagara Falls and Peel. Let me read from a letter from the Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board: "The board is extremely pleased to support your ... bill." That's what they wrote. "The unlicensed taxi issue is a huge problem in Niagara." That's what was said by the Niagara police.

If passed, Bill 169 would make it illegal to carry passengers for compensation without a proper licence or permit, and I want to make it very clear that this is an illegal activity that is being carried on. It would allow for charges against the driver, the owner of the vehicle and anyone who arranges the ride. Convictions would mean fines of up to \$20,000. I want to make it very clear that we are not trying to change the existing municipal licensing regime. The proposed bill would target the few bad apples who have no licence at all and should not be operating in an area where they are not authorized to do so.

We want to make sure that when people arrive at an Ontario airport or travel to one of our cities, they get into a safe and licensed cab. Bill 169 would protect our visitors, our children, seniors and other pedestrians. It

would protect drivers and passengers. It would make public transit a more convenient choice. It would ease congestion. And it would help keep our economy moving, our air clean and our families safe.

I want to urge honourable members on all sides of the House to give this legislation their enthusiastic support. As this bill is all about road user safety, I am sure that all members of this House care deeply about road user safety and putting a stop to illegal activities in this province.

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell) :** Monsieur le Président, comme l'a souligné mon honorable collègue le ministre Takhar, un réseau de transport sécuritaire et efficace est essentiel à notre prospérité et à une bonne qualité de vie pour tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes, et même les visiteurs voyageant sur nos routes en Ontario.

Yes, as stated by Honourable Minister Takhar, a safe and efficient transportation network is key to our prosperity and quality of life.

Je vais vous démontrer deux façons particulières que le projet de loi 169 pourrait réaliser nos objectifs, soit la sécurité et l'efficacité sur nos autoroutes.

Let me talk especially about two ways that Bill 169 would accomplish our objectives on Ontario highways.

As Minister Takhar mentioned, the legislation would double the fines for speeding in highway construction zones where workers are present. Between 1999 and 2003, 50 people were killed in highway work zones across Ontario and close to 3,500 were injured. Although not all of these people were workers, these figures highlight the need to drive safely in work zones. We believe stiffer fines would make drivers think twice about putting the lives of construction workers and their own families at risk by speeding. As Minister Takhar mentioned, under the proposed legislation anyone caught driving 30 kilometres over the posted limit in construction zones when workers are present would face a fine of \$420.

#### 1900

We have to remember, at one time, our member from Chatham-Kent-Essex, Pat Hoy, had submitted a bill when we were in opposition, and it is still on the books. But we are taking care of it now. Drivers who ignore the Stop and Slow signs held by traffic control workers would face fines of up to \$500, if Bill 169 is passed.

Je voudrais souligner un amendement important au projet de loi.

Cette loi imposerait désormais à l'office de la voirie ou l'entreprise de services publics d'embaucher des personnes ou des contractuels en vue de faciliter la circulation routière. Ces personnes travailleront soit sur la route ou près de celle-ci, dans une zone de construction ou d'entretien, dans le but d'accroître la sécurité du public.

De plus, l'amendement de ce projet de loi permettrait aux pompiers de diriger la circulation en cas d'urgence. Bien entendu, les conducteurs de grues et les préposés à l'entretien doivent avoir une autorisation écrite de l'office de la voirie pour assumer ces tâches.



Bill 169 also addresses truck and bus safety. Our government recognizes the key role played by the 545,000 commercially licensed bus and truck drivers in Ontario. Together, we are improving safety on our roads.

There are now 43% more trucks on our roads than 15 years ago. But the number of fatal collisions involving large trucks has dropped by 21%. Yes, the number of collisions has dropped by 21%.

If passed, Bill 169 would adopt the new and improved National Safety Code standard for daily vehicle inspections. The standard will lead to more stringent and thorough inspections. Mechanical defects would be spotted earlier. If the bill is passed, charges could be laid when parts come flying off on the highway. This includes all vehicles, not just trucks. It would hold many parties accountable, including drivers, owners and even mechanics.

Nous voulons une loi qui soit sévère. Nous voulons que toutes les parties assument les responsabilités en matière de sécurité.

Easing traffic congestion is one of utter importance for our government. Every year almost \$1.2 billion worth of goods are carried on Ontario highways. Highway closures can cost up to \$600,000 an hour.

Bill 169 would allow police to clear and reopen highways faster than ever in the event of a collision or a spill. It would clarify removal powers and protect police and the province from liability. Sometimes trucking companies or their insurers insist on bringing in a cleanup crew from hundreds of kilometres away. It can take hours.

Police support the bill. As OPP Sergeant Cam Wooley told the Toronto Sun, "The police have been waiting for this legislation for a long time. It's going to save lives, improve the quality of life and the economy." This is a ringing endorsement of our government's effort to improve safety and efficiency on Ontario's roads. I urge all members to lend their support to the bill.

Let me expand on how the bill would improve safety across the province. In 2003, nearly one third of all collisions in northern Ontario occurred on snowy, icy or slushy roads. Bill 169, if passed, would allow the use of studded tires under prescribed circumstances. Research in Sweden shows the use of winter and studded tires can cut winter collisions by about 5%. In northern Ontario, this would represent about three lives saved every winter. This is also something that residents of northern Ontario have been asking for for a very long time, and we have responded.

Il est crucial d'adopter ce projet de loi afin de donner à la population du nord de l'Ontario de meilleurs choix pour conduire en hiver, d'autant plus que l'hiver est à nos portes. Ce n'est pas tout. Le gouvernement travaille avec nos partenaires en sécurité routière afin de sensibiliser les automobilistes et de réduire les risques associés à la conduite en hiver. Nous continuerons à encourager les automobilistes à ralentir sur les routes glacées ou enneigées.

De plus, ce projet de loi 169 permettrait d'améliorer la qualité des cours de conduite automobile aux quatre

coins de la province et autoriserait le ministère des Transports à régir la qualité des cours de formation que donnent les moniteurs à toutes les catégories de détenteurs de permis. À l'heure actuelle, les instructeurs des cours de permis de catégorie G doivent remplir certaines conditions imposées par le gouvernement, mais la qualité de la formation de ces moniteurs n'est pas visée ici. Notre projet de loi habiliterait le ministère des Transports à déterminer les qualifications professionnelles que doivent avoir les personnes qui enseignent ces cours de conduite et l'autoriserait à délivrer des permis à ces personnes en plus de les soumettre à un contrôle et à des vérifications.

J'ai ici une lettre du Bureau d'assurance du Canada, un organisme qui depuis longtemps collabore avec le gouvernement pour accroître la sécurité des routes dans laquelle il appuie fermement les mesures que nous proposons. Je vous lis un passage de cette lettre : « Les assureurs demandent de telles mesures d'exécution depuis un bon bout de temps. Nous sommes ravis que vous ayez proposé des dispositions que nous jugeons essentielles. »

La Certified Transportation Instructors Association est d'accord. Son président, Keith Black, a écrit : « Nous croyons que les moniteurs d'auto-écoles vont applaudir ce que fait le gouvernement pour créer un cadre grâce auquel nous serons en mesure de continuer à encourager et à améliorer la sécurité des routes en Ontario. »

Our proposed legislation would give the Minister of Transportation the authority to qualify, license, monitor, inspect and audit people involved in driver training in Ontario.

I have a letter from the Insurance Bureau of Canada, a long-time safety partner, expressing its strong support for this. The letter from the IBC states: "Insurers have been seeking these enforcement measures for some time. We are delighted you have brought forward this essential provision." The Certified Transportation Instructor Association agrees. President Keith Black writes, "We feel that professional driving instructors will applaud the government in their efforts to create an environment that will continue to encourage and upgrade safety in the province of Ontario."

Bill 169 is a wide-ranging package of measures that would improve safety across Ontario. I have only talked about a few aspects of the bill, but this legislation, in total, would improve safety for everyone on our roads, ease congestion on our highways and in our communities and protect consumers, whether they are learning to drive or looking for a cab ride.

Ontario has the safest roads in North America, but we can and must do more to protect people on Ontario roads.

Les routes de l'Ontario sont les plus sécuritaires en Amérique du Nord, mais nous pouvons et devons faire davantage pour protéger les usagers de routes ontariennes.

Grâce au projet de loi 169, la qualité de vie des Ontariens et Ontariennes et leur prospérité en seront grandement améliorées. Je suis convaincu que tous les membres



de l'Assemblée législative vont appuyer nos efforts, ainsi que le projet de loi sur les transports en commun et la sécurité routière.

Bill 169 would improve the quality of life for Ontarians and drive our prosperity. I know all members will support our efforts and support our transit and road safety bill.

1910

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** I'm pleased to respond to my colleague's comments. The minister probably spoke for about 15 minutes or so on third reading of this bill that comes before us, Bill 169. In fact, one thing I should note for the record—my colleague from York North had mentioned that Steve Gilchrist, who sat in this House as the member for Scarborough East, had been a very strong proponent of clearing the roadsides to ensure—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** He certainly was, and is. He stood by his Conservative team, that's for sure. He was somebody you would want helping you out in the corners, there's no doubt about it.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Cuddly.

**Mr. Hudak:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Kormos:** Fuzzy.

**Mr. Hudak:** Fuzzy to an extent. I think that wasn't exactly what I was going to speak about with respect to Mr. Gilchrist—very important points—but nonetheless, he was a champion of this initiative to make sure that police, fire and other emergency services had the ability to clear roadside accidents relatively quickly and therefore facilitate the movement of commuters, trade and others utilizing particularly the 400-series highways. We're pleased to see aspects like that in Bill 169, as I said before, but I do think it's important as well to commend Mr. Gilchrist, who probably, I think, from time to time, still watches these legislative proceedings. He would probably ask—

*Interjection:* Daily.

**Mr. Hudak:** You think daily? I don't know if Steve will be upset that I'm not wearing my jacket. It's the first time I've spoken without a jacket. Caught me a bit off guard. But while we're debating 169—I'll rise to speak more to the contents a bit later on—I do want to commend a colleague who sat in this place for eight years and who had pushed this initiative. I know Mr. Gilchrist, the former member from Scarborough East, would be pleased to see it moving forward under Bill 169.

**Mr. Kormos:** New Democrats agree there is much in the bill that warrants passage of the bill. The minister knows this. The arguments have been made. He's well aware of our concerns, specifically about section 4, and section 1 to the extent that it incorporates and refers to section 4.

Studded tires: I'm from southern Ontario. The only member further south than me, at least in terms of central Ontario, is Tim Hudak. Now, as you get further west, down toward Windsor way, you get further south, but

that's a different story. Far be it from me to tell northerners not to use studded tires. I'm prepared to concede that common sense tells you that studded tires are going to enhance safety. At the same time, it's got to be understood that studded tires, notwithstanding the Swedish technology, are probably going to cause some enhanced wear of roadways, at some points, in some places. Again, I'm not suggesting in any way, shape or form that the quality of the roadway or the value of the roadway overrides the value of human life, because I'm not the one who has to drive in what are remarkable winter conditions. No doubt in Niagara or Toronto if it snows a little bit everything comes to a dead halt. In northern Ontario people travel great distances in some pretty cold, freezing, snowy, icy weather. But I think one of the things that the government hasn't addressed, notwithstanding the Swedish technology, is the prospect of enhanced road repair and maintenance costs for municipalities in which drivers logically, when permitted by law, use studded tires. One of the things we're interested in, not to the point of saying no to studded tires, is methods of assessing the amount of increased road damage and, of course, the government's response to that. I'll speak to that further in the course of my opportunity.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I think it's quite clear to most people in this House or listening in this evening that the Minister of Transportation and his parliamentary assistant have made very compelling arguments to bring about passage of Bill 169 on third reading.

One of the things that really interests me is enhancing speeding fines within a construction zone. It's interesting, when you see work being done on a highway, whether it's a highway or a municipal road, that now they try to shame you into slowing down. Often, they'll have electronic signs in place. They clearly mark it: Reduce speed within a construction zone. There may be a road flag person there trying to bring vehicles to a stop. But often you'll see now that they put up these digital electronic signs to try to, as I said, shame people into in fact lowering their speeds as they go through a construction zone, because, indeed, it's very risky going through at a higher speed. People are working there; there's equipment moving. That part of the bill, I think, goes a long way to improving safety through a construction zone for the flag people and the people who are working there.

Secondly, enhancing safety at school crossings: It's been mentioned that the member from Chatham—Kent Essex was a real leader in this particular area, school crossings, and making sure that it's safe for both students and other pedestrians who may want to be getting across.

Thirdly, the area of tighter security: A provision in this bill to prevent driver's licence fraud, I think, is extremely important. We know that there are elements in our society today that are getting hold of fraudulent documents in order to do things that we'd consider less desirable.

There are many points of this bill that are very important, I think, to the people of Ontario and that certainly need to be supported at third reading



**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** This is a very interesting bill. It's a bill that has many clauses in it that are very supportable and that make good sense. I notice that the first section, section 128, that's talked about in the explanatory notes talks about the ability for municipalities to pass a bylaw that would limit the speed limit to 30 kilometres per hour in traffic-calming areas. On the face of it, that would be a marvellous opportunity for some municipalities to use in a traffic-calming area, providing that traffic-calming area didn't become a backlog and a backup for traffic, causing frustrations for drivers and resultant erratic driving patterns that sometimes frustrated drivers exhibit.

Section 128 is another one that I think might cause confusion. It suggests that they would be able to use "variable speed limits on designated highways or parts of highways." Driving down many highways, particularly when you're cruising down through the United States, quite often the speed limit changes from 55 to somewhere between 55 and 75, and it's the same highway. I find it very confusing. You never know what the speed limit is. Although I always tend to be cautious in those situations, it could be a wonderful opportunity for police officers to create a fishing hole, I think they call it, where it's an opportunity to give out tickets. So it confuses drivers on any given highway. It also goes on to talk about different speed limits applying at different times of day, so that you would have to check your watch to see what the speed limit was on a particular highway.

I find those things to be very confusing, and I think a confused driver on a highway is a dangerous driver. I think that perhaps in committee we should have had a look at that. Perhaps the minister wants to consider whether or not that's a good idea for Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Reply, member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

**Mr. Lalonde:** I just heard the member from Niagara Centre talking about the studded tire. Let me tell you that the studded tires of the past are gone. I know that at the time they were doing some damage to our roads, but the new ones are what we call Scandinavian studded tires. If they are to save lives in Ontario—we predict that having permission to use studded tires could save up to three lives a year—there's no money when it comes down to saving lives. Really, you just can't compare the temperature down in the Niagara area with the temperatures up north. This is why, if Bill 169 is passed, these studded tires will be permissible in the northern part of Ontario.

1920

The member for Halton has mentioned the reduction of speed in a work zone. I just wanted to mention that my colleague from Chatham—Kent—Essex was telling me that one of his colleagues, a close friend, was killed in a work zone in the Chatham-Kent area, and that is why he introduced his bill in December 2001. Today, in Bill 169 we are taking this into consideration again to try to save lives in Ontario.

Those are the two points I want to bring back to the attention of all of the members.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I believe we have unanimous consent to defer our lead speaker on this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to step down the lead? Agreed.

**Mrs. Munro:** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member from Cambridge.

I'm pleased to be able to join the debate on Bill 169. I think there's considerable understanding here of the fact that there are a number of worthwhile features to this bill. At the same time, there are some issues that remain of concern to many Ontarians. There's also the concern about the question of the increased burden on enforcement agencies and how to pay for these new rules.

As a former parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation, I have to say that I've had the opportunity—I will speak to in a few moments about some of the issues that appear in this bill—and so find it very interesting then to see that this government is moving on some of those initiatives.

There is, however, one particularly dark cloud in this bill, and that has to do with the taxi dispute that this bill attempts to resolve. It simply remains one of the flawed areas of the bill. The government has failed to properly consult with drivers from Toronto to alleviate their concerns about the bill. As recently as today, our party's transportation critic, the member for Durham, has urged the government not to pass the anti-scooping provisions of the bill, and it's worth reading into the record the concerns that have been expressed on this issue.

"The official opposition is asking that sections of Bill 169 affecting the taxi and limousine industry not be proclaimed until the issue can be dealt with either under the Municipal Act or the City of Toronto Act," and obviously then concerns that reflect the discussions. "In committee, the Liberals promised to deal with this section of the bill. The opposition is asking that Bill 169 be sent to committee of the whole to remove the section that affects the taxi industry." I think that it's important to indicate here the concerns that have been raised on this particular part of the bill.

I want to refer to a particular area in the bill on construction sites because these have always been a major concern for advocates of transportation safety. In my former role as the parliamentary assistant, I chaired the then minister's advisory committee on safety, and certainly construction sites was one of the key areas of concern. Some of the initiatives that we see in this particular bill reflect those discussions and probably go a considerable distance to meet the kinds of concerns that were raised in that committee.

Section 128 of the Highway Traffic Act is amended to permit municipalities to designate construction zones on highways and to set a maximum speed of not less than 40 kilometres an hour. A new section requires drivers to obey traffic control stop and slow signs displayed by a traffic control person on or adjacent to a roadway where construction or maintenance work is being carried out. Fines for speeding in those areas have now doubled. I



think this reflects the conversations that we had at the time because of the fact that municipalities also have a role and a concern about safety, as well as the provincial ministry.

Obviously, I support these sections very strongly, as construction workers who have no choice but to work along our highways deserve, quite frankly, better protection. Drivers need to be aware and take care in all driving conditions, and particularly in times of bad weather and low visibility. In the committee hearings on this bill, the Ontario Safety League indicated its support for this provision, pointing out that, in many cases, construction personnel have been injured or even killed as a result of reckless behaviour.

Another important section of the bill will allow the minister to designate any lane as a high-occupancy vehicle lane and to limit the use of that lane to particular vehicles with a specified number of passengers. However, there are concerns that I think the ministry needs to look at with regard to that, particularly those raised by some of the stakeholders, including the Ontario Trucking Association, which was concerned about knowing how they're going to have any effect on congestion. In my own experience in driving where those lanes exist in other jurisdictions, they're very often separated by a concrete barrier. The evidence seems to suggest that without that barrier, there is an increase in collisions.

Ontario's truckers are also concerned that the changes mean that existing lanes will be designated high occupancy, not just new lanes and, of course, they worry about the loss in capacity on our highways. I have to say that, as a driver, I'm very concerned as well, because what we're doing is, perhaps prematurely, taking these lanes out of service to make them high-occupancy lanes. When you look at the greater Toronto area and the kind of congestion we're dealing with, this becomes an even greater concern.

Enforcement is another key concern regarding this bill, because any changes to any law are only as good as the political will to enforce. While this bill gives increased powers to police and inspectors, it also assumes that they're going to be able to perform a greater number of services. When we're looking at a government that continues to promise 1,000 new police officers but does not deliver, I think it's legitimate to have some concerns about the issue not only of who foots the bill for this but, in fact, how enforcement is going to take place. This, again, was something shared by the Ontario Safety League. The Ontario Trucking Association also raised the issue of there not being enough OPP officers on our highways currently, so this will only be exacerbated.

One of the other aspects of this bill in terms of enforcement was related by my colleague Jim Wilson, who, when the bill was introduced, very wisely stated that MADD Canada has pointed out that when 16,500 drivers are suspended every year and drive after being charged with impaired driving, there's no sense making more laws if you can't follow through on enforcement. So I think there's a real concern amongst the users and the people who would like to support the bill that without

the appropriate enforcement, these changes are meaningless.

### 1930

When you look at the kinds of statistics that MADD can provide us with, they certainly demonstrate that if there are over 16,000 drivers on the road who have suspended licences, they're hardly going to be particularly interested in following laws with regard to school zoning and reduced speeds. So I think that certainly remains a concern.

Members may recall that this House unanimously passed my resolution to establish roadside memorials for those killed by drunk drivers. I have to give credit to the Minister of Transportation, who has assured me that his ministry is acting on this. The media have reported details, and I am pleased to see that the minister is carrying out the will of the House on this issue.

Frankly, I wish that my resolution was unnecessary. If we had the right enforcement, then more drunk drivers would be off the road. We need more enforcement for all driving and speeding violations. If someone is willing to drink and drive, they are probably willing to violate other traffic laws. Bad drivers are bad drivers whether they drink or not. If someone does not care enough to slow down for the safety of construction workers beside the road, they probably don't care that it is wrong to drive drunk.

When it comes to highway safety, the priority must be on keeping people safe. I was certainly very proud of the aggressive manner in which the former government attacked the problem of flying truck tires. The current bill has some important points to add to these protections, but we must remember that our campaign against flying tires only succeeded because we put in the appropriate measures of enforcement.

This continues, then, to be a very strong message on any kind of legislation that will deal with carrying through on the laws that are proposed in this bill. The government must also move on to deal with the rest of the problems with transportation and its infrastructure. Gridlock is becoming a larger issue every day in Ontario: The government's policies will make the problem even worse. The greenbelt, in particular, will require massive highway investments to service the development that will leapfrog the greenbelt areas like Guelph, Orangeville and southern Simcoe county.

In closing, I would say that Bill 169 is generally a positive bill, but this government has many outstanding issues to resolve on the transportation file.

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I have the pleasure to address the merits of Bill 169, and there are a number of laudable and good sections to this bill that could assist drivers and make our highways safer.

I'd like, however, to deal first with one section on which I hope the government will take the recommendations made by the opposition party, and that is section 4, which deals with the pickup of passengers at the airport.

That is a long, outstanding problem, the battle—if I may put it that way—between the airport limousines and



the taxi industry. It has been going on for a long time, and this bill attempts to address that problem in section 4 and solve it to the satisfaction of the government. However, it does lead to some problems that I'd like to discuss.

Recently, I spent one month in India travelling from Dehli to Jaipur to Agra for the Taj Mahal and then to Goa. I was amazed at the number of vehicles on the road, and not just automobiles, but also trucks and motorized rickshaws, as they call them. The traffic was extremely heavy, and I thought of our country of 30 million and compared it to the population of India, which is just under a billion people today, as I understand it. I thought how they have so few cars per capita compared to us, but those numbers of vehicles are increasing rapidly, and where is the energy and the oil going to come from?

We know that Canada as a whole is wasteful of energy. We have a cold climate and therefore we need energy for that purpose. We have a large country and we need gasoline for that purpose. Everyone talks about conservation, everyone wants to do something, but we never really seem to get around to it.

Two years ago, I spent a considerable length of time in China. Of course, at one billion people, they too have traffic jams, and the need for energy is growing there also.

The trouble with section 4 is that it codifies the misuse of energy. It may try to address the problem and the concerns between the taxi industry and the limousine industry; however, it ends up being wasteful of energy. It seems that the Minister of Transport didn't discuss the matter with the Minister of Energy. The Minister of Energy talks about the conservation of energy and how we've got to do something, and I think everybody's in agreement with that, yet section 4 of this Bill 169 codifies and imposes dead loads from the airport.

Now, what does that mean? At the present time, limousines are entitled to pick up people at the airport and drive them to their homes anywhere in Ontario. That's not a dead load; the automobile is occupied and performing a service and transporting the individuals from the airport to their homes. But limousine drivers also have the privilege of picking up drivers to drive them back from their home to the airport. That's not totally efficient, because I'm sure there are many times when the car is returning to the airport or making a pickup and it is empty. However, there are many occasions, since they have the privilege of picking passengers up and bringing them to the airport—they're also entitled under the law to pick passengers up at a hotel, where they might be referred by a doorman or a concierge. There is at least a method there of possibly filling up an automobile—and they're large automobiles. Limousine drivers live up to their name, because they're usually driving Lincolns with a V8 motor, which is a substantial gas guzzler. But that is partially efficient.

What section 4 does is ensure and codify that taxicabs, however, will never be inefficient when it comes to energy in dealing with the airport, because what it says is

very simple: Taxis may deliver passengers to the airport, so they're performing a worthwhile function, and they are burning gasoline, of course; however, it specifies specifically that they shall not, under any circumstances, pick up passengers at the airport. That means that all taxis delivering passengers to the airport will, of necessity and under the laws of the province of Ontario, return to wherever they started from in the city, or to their headquarters, and they will be returning empty and devoid of all passengers. That is a waste.

**1940**

I get the feeling this all grew up because, perhaps, as I said, the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Transportation really didn't think and didn't communicate. One of the problems with government is what they call the silo effect, where ministries come up with legislation in a silo and, through the lack of communication with other ministries, they are encroaching or working at cross-purposes. I don't think I've ever seen a case so blatant as this one in wasting energy, where at the same time we have the Minister of Energy promising and attempting to bring energy savings to Ontario, energy savings that we sorely need if we are to remain competitive in world markets.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I want to take the time to make a few comments on the debate presented tonight by the members from York North and Cambridge. They've raised a couple of important and salient points about this bill. I will be taking an opportunity to raise some of these issues and reinforce some of the concerns that we in the New Democratic Party have on this particular bill.

I think the points they've made are reflective of the situation out there with regard to the stakeholders and with regard to the good and the bad of the bill. It's an unfortunate scenario that we're in the situation where the bad is so bad and where both opposition parties are saying that it could be resolved in a very easy way if we take the bad and do something else with it, because the good is so good that everybody can support it. Unfortunately, the government doesn't seem to be prepared—at least as far as I know—to deal with that particular situation, and that's an unfortunate thing.

It's unfortunate when you could get a consensus of sorts or an agreement on 80% or 90% of a bill and unfortunately there are odious pieces in it, unsupportable pieces in it, pieces in it that are just vulgar in terms of the effect they have on some of the stakeholders. It's unfortunate that we're in that situation.

I'm going to take the time in a few moments to outline, from the NDP's perspective, what the lay of the land is with regard to this bill. I think that the members who have spoken just now are on the right track in terms of some of the issues they've raised, and I look forward to making my contribution in a very few moments.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** I'm certainly pleased to rise this evening and speak in support of Bill 169 and to add further comments to those of the members



from Halton and York North. I believe Bill 169 will promote a transit system that will move us forward.

I also want to speak to one very specific part of the act, and that is also in recognition of the member for Chatham-Kent Essex. I believe a lot of work was done by this good member. When we see regulations like this coming forward, what more can we as a government do to support our children? Just to reinforce what it is, this will require drivers to remain stopped at school crossings until children and crossing guards have left half of the roadway where a vehicle is travelling. It will require crossing guards to display a stop sign until all children have left the crossing. I can tell you that moving our children around is something that we must do in order to ensure that they receive a proper education in our rural communities. It's so important to ensure that our children remain safe, so seeing this as part of Bill 169 is important for our rural communities and the health and safety of our children.

The amendments that are part of Bill 169 will give the providers of our transportation system new tools to provide a far more effective transportation system, and we as a government will move this forward. It's certainly my pleasure to rise and support Bill 169.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** It's an interesting bill, and there were many interesting points brought to bear by the members from Simcoe somewhere and Cambridge someplace.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I believe it's York North and Cambridge.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Somewhere around there. I know where they live.

I thought one of the interesting points was that this bill is going to create a legislated dead-loading. When trucks have to travel from one point to another to pick up a load, that time they travel with no load on their truck is called dead-loading. When you're driving a tractor-trailer, that's a very expensive operation and you want to make sure your dead-loading is as short as possible, that there's always some load in the back of the truck that's paying your gas bill and giving you some return on your investment.

This bill is going to legislate dead-loading so that any taxis that run to the airport will be using a very precious commodity that our society is only just beginning to appreciate—the cost of gasoline—as they dead-load back to where they might again pick up a paying fare. If we don't maximize our ability to use gasoline and make the most of it, then there are all kinds of consequences of that, including the consequences of unnecessary pollution and all the things that spin out of that.

I haven't looked at all the sections and understood the bill completely as to the balance, but a lot of sections of this bill give us concerns. There are also a lot of sections that are commendable. It's that mix of sections that make this bill very interesting.

**Mr. Kormos:** Folks should know that in almost four minutes' time, Andrea Horwath, the New Democratic Party member for Hamilton East, who of course is the newest member of our caucus, having been elected in a

by-election in Hamilton East—and you should know that Sheila White is, as we speak, out campaigning in the Scarborough riding where a by-election has been called. Sheila White, the NDP candidate, who lives in the riding, who knows it well, who is just an incredibly effective, capable person and who will indeed be an extremely valuable additional to this Legislature, not just for New Democrats but, as Ms. Horwath was, for the Legislative Assembly as a whole. Sheila White—the Scarborough by-election just called—is out there campaigning right now.

Section 146.1 that was created by the act is an interesting one. It's one that we support. Just as we supported the Highway Traffic Act amendment that required drivers approaching a police cruiser that is parked by the side—remember that one? A police cruiser parked with the lights flashing? You'll recall that New Democrats fought tooth and nail to try to get the government to beef that one up. We said if it's good enough for police officers, why isn't it good enough for firefighters? Why isn't it good enough for road crews with the yellow flashing signs?

The other observation that was made, as I said at the time, was, "Look, only an idiot doesn't slow down for police cruisers that are on the side of the road doing an investigation and, furthermore, try to move over one lane." It became law, and as I travel the QEW, primarily, it's amazing. Moron after moron after moron persists in speeding by—well, they do—notwithstanding that it became law with some pretty serious consequences. I'm going to speak to that and to the fact that what we have to do now is integrate 146.1, should this bill pass, with that previous statutory requirement in the Highway Traffic Act.

1950

**The Deputy Speaker:** Two minutes to reply, the member for York North.

**Mrs. Munro:** I've listened to the two-minute comments of different members, and I have to say that they're certainly, at best, very wide-ranging in their responses, some of which have absolutely nothing to do with the bill and others which have a kind of tenuous connection.

However, from the comments, I think the member from Hamilton East and I probably share the most in common in terms of concerns.

**Mr. Kormos:** You're the only two rational people here.

**Mrs. Munro:** Women.

One of the problems for a government when it tries to cobble together so many issues under one umbrella topic is that people are going to divide on the issue: that some aspects are laudable and are maybe overdue and certainly areas on which the government should proceed, but then there are the contentious ones, the ones where people have a feeling that this is just being pushed forward and there isn't the kind of consensus and resolution that frankly there should be.

In my final comment, I would just say that as with any piece of legislation, it is only as good as it is able to be



enforced. That is going to be the litmus test of this bill's success. There are a number of initiatives around safety that are laudable: Are they going to be enforced?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. Horwath:** I first believe that we have unanimous consent to stand down the lead of our critic in this area.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Hamilton East has asked for unanimous consent to stand down—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I heard a no.

**Interjection:** No. I said "yo."

**The Deputy Speaker:** Oh, "yo." Thank you. That makes me feel a lot better. Agreed.

The member for Hamilton East.

**Ms. Horwath:** I was getting a little nervous trying to figure out how I was going to fill an hour of remarks.

**Mr. Kormos:** You would have done fine.

**Ms. Horwath:** Thank you, Mr. Kormos, I appreciate that.

I wanted to first acknowledge that our critic for this area was completely planning to be here tonight, had every intention of being here tonight, but members will know that there have been some urgent issues that have taken not only his attention but finally the attention of the government—significantly overdue—in the community of Kashechewan, a community he represents, that has had some real, ongoing, in fact deadly issues with their drinking water, so he has had to go back to his riding this evening to make sure that those issues are being adequately looked after tonight and, hopefully, tomorrow as well.

Because he was unable to attend tonight, we've asked for that unanimous consent. To a great extent, I appreciate the government and the official opposition's willingness to stand down that lead. Gilles Bisson has been carrying this file as the critic from day one, and his understanding of the issues and the stakeholders is acute. It would be a disservice to this House and to this Legislature to not have his voice in its full capacity as a one-hour lead-off speech on this particular bill.

Having said that, there are some things I would like to raise about the bill. I think it's fair to say that Bill 169, the Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, can be characterized as a bill that contains the good, the bad and the ugly. I'm going to spend some time on each of those areas—

**Mr. Kormos:** That would be a great movie title.

**Ms. Horwath:** The good, the bad and the ugly? I think I've got something there. It could be something, Mr. Kormos, that we could maybe make some money on some day in our retirements, because Lord knows—well, we're not going to go into the retirement issue.

Nonetheless, there are some specific pieces of this bill that are supportable, that in fact New Democrats support wholeheartedly, that we would like to see fast-tracked, as a matter of fact, that we would like to see implemented; provisions, for example, that make cities and towns safer for pedestrians, that raise fines and create greater enforcement for infractions that exist right now in pedes-

trian areas, fines that currently are not deterrents, but this bill will help to beef up the deterrent factor in some of these areas.

There are, however, other pieces that are missing. For example, fines and demerit points are one thing, but funding of enforcement agencies, funding of police to be able to enforce new regulations, is another matter altogether. So although on the one hand we think it's the right direction, on the other hand we recognize that there needs to be some resources put into the enforcement of any new standards.

The one that's really important and that we would like to see implemented at as quick a pace as possible is the implementation of the high-occupancy vehicle lanes on major highways in the GTA. We all know that gridlock is a significant problem in this province. Mr. Kormos, the member for Niagara Centre, was saying the QEW is the highway he most often travels, and coming from just up the street from him, in Hamilton, it is also the highway that I most often travel in the province of Ontario, and it is frozen with gridlock on a regular basis. We as New Democrats believe that measures in Bill 169 that would enable the government to introduce those high-occupancy lanes are long overdue. The minister needs to get on with this particular task and I think we would immediately see an impact on the level of gridlock that exists currently. We would be reducing the number of vehicles on the highways almost immediately. I don't know how many times it's happened to anybody that actually drives the—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Hamilton East, just for a second. I'm really having a little trouble concentrating up here this evening with the chatter that's going on. Just keep it to a lower level, please, so we can hear the member.

**Ms. Horwath:** I was having a hard time concentrating myself. My point was that it's simple math. Anybody who has driven on the highway looks around—I do it every time I'm forced to take a car. I'm proud to say that I don't take a car from Hamilton to Toronto every day. I try as often as possible to take the GO train. I'm in the very enviable position of living right now about a block and a half away—not even a block and a half, really, a block away—from our GO station in Hamilton, so as often as possible, I take the GO train. The service isn't as regular as I would like to see, and I think that's another area that we need to address in this House, to try to get that service beefed up in urban centres that are close to Toronto. But if I do have to take my car, I don't know how many times I've looked around and, in every direction, the only thing I see is cars with single-driver occupancy. The piece of this bill that addresses the high-occupancy vehicle lanes would be able to affect that almost immediately. You would see people catching on to the fact that if you're carpooling, if you have more than one person, maybe three or four people, in your car, you're able to take a lane designated for a larger number of people, thereby taking people out of the traffic flow generally and increasing movement on the highway.



That's one of the good things. If you recall, I said this bill is about the good, the bad and the ugly.

I'm going to spend some more time on some of the other issues of the good, but before doing so I think it's really important, because I don't have very much time, to start talking a little bit about what's problematic in the bill. One of the things that is problematic, and it's really clear that it's problematic, because very few bills lead to the kinds of demonstrations, the kinds of grassroots effort, the kinds of obvious and vociferous demonstration that took place here just the other day and of course took place when the bill was first introduced—I guess that was actually at second reading, when the bill was in second reading. Those were the voices, the horns and unfortunately the exhaust fumes of the people from the taxi industry who were here at Queen's Park protesting this particular bill. The Toronto taxi industry has been here at least twice to show their utter disdain for section 4 of schedule A in this bill. Why did they do that? I'm going to try to explain it a little bit and then perhaps, if I have time, I'm going to quote directly from some of the literature they prepared for these demonstrations.

#### 2000

The bottom line is that they see that section of the bill as entrenching an already unfair system, that it basically legislates the injustices that exist right now in the system with taxi and limousine services in Toronto and at the airport. What they're saying—and they're correct—is that these issues are actually governed under the Municipal Act, and what this particular piece of the legislation is doing is saying to one sector that scooping is not OK and, de facto, saying that it is OK in another sector, just by virtue of the fact that in one sector it can be more or less policed, regulated and controlled, because geographically the airport is a place that can easily be monitored and controlled, whereas the rest of the city of Toronto cannot be easily policed, monitored or controlled in regard to anti-scooping amendments.

Unfortunately, what the government has ended up doing in this bill has been in favour of one taxi jurisdiction, a.k.a the airport limousine sector, at the expense of the Toronto taxi and limousine drivers. The Toronto taxi industry sees section 4 of this bill as a way of strengthening the existing system, which virtually allows the airport taxis and limousines to pick up fares within the city, largely at will, and take them to the airport without any problem, but in the case of the taxi industry in Toronto, the licensed taxi and limousine drivers have to pay a \$10 fee as they queue up in the airport to take a fare back with them, and that's not a requirement for the limousine drivers. That's the crux of the injustice that is enshrined and entrenched in this bill.

Instead of doing the thing that really would address this problem, instead of opening up the Municipal Act and trying to level the playing field between these various stakeholders—the airport drivers and the Toronto drivers—the government has opted to make these amendments to the Highway Traffic Act that are found in section 4 of Bill 169, and that is really entrenching an

existing system of unfairness, inequity and economic hardship for the taxi industry in the city of Toronto.

I try not to take vehicles wherever I go; I try to take public transit. I try not to use my personal auto. In fact, when I am in Toronto and I'm sans automobile, when I'm without my car, I often walk. I try to walk as much as possible, because it's good exercise. Sitting in this Legislature until 9:30 at night doesn't give you much exercise, so when I can, I walk. But when I can't, when there's inclement weather, when I have many pieces of luggage or baggage that I have to carry, I call a cab. I can tell you that since this issue hit the Legislature, virtually every single taxi driver I have spoken to—and there are thousands of them—has said the same thing. I ask them, "Do you know anything about this legislation that's in front of the Legislature called Bill 169?" and of course, they have done an excellent job of educating the taxi drivers in the city. Virtually every taxi driver knows what's going on, and I'm telling you, they're ticked, they're unhappy, they're displeased, they're frustrated and they're angry, and I don't blame them one bit. Notwithstanding their efforts to have this bill altered or changed in a way that makes it more fair for them, the government has simply been ignoring their pleas, and their concerns have been falling on deaf ears. That's the unfortunate situation that still exists until this day, at third reading of this bill. That's an unfortunate thing and it's one of the bads.

I probably have a minute or two to read this out. The taxi industry demonstration that took place had a number of points to it, and I'm going to read them quickly because I think they're important. This is in their own words. We can sit here and talk about what they think and what this person or that person thinks, but when it's in their own words, you really get a better understanding of how they perceive the issue. They say:

"The purpose of the demonstration is twofold. First, to bring to the public's attention the lack of a level playing field that has been prevalent between the Toronto taxi industry and Pearson airport taxis and limousines for the last 27 years, and second, to expose the true motives behind the introduction of a certain part of Bill 169 by the Minister of Transportation, Harinder Takhar."

That is probably the ugly, and I think if I have a chance, I'll talk a little bit about what they're alluding to when they talk about exposing the true motives behind the introduction.

Nonetheless, the flyer goes on to talk about the specifics around the issues. What they say at the end is:

"Finally, we would like to reiterate that in a meeting on Monday, April 25, 2005, the city of Toronto's planning and transportation committee adopted a motion...." It reads:

"The city indicate its opposition to Bill 169 (An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and to amend and repeal various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters) as it pertains to 'scooping' fares at the airport, unless it is amended to remove the exemption that permits airport licensed vehicles from 'scooping' fares within the city of Toronto, and the Minister of Transportation and opposition critics be so advised."



So basically, the city of Toronto agrees. I know there is other evidence of that, other documentation of that disagreement. If the industry is out in droves more than once—very often—on this issue and the city of Toronto is saying that this is the wrong thing to do, then it's incumbent upon us here to do the right thing and address the concerns that are being raised, not simply turn a blind eye to the concerns that are being raised.

I think when we're talking about the problems with this bill, there are several others but this is the biggest one. This is the most difficult one for New Democrats to find a way of supporting. It's unfortunate, because as I said at the very beginning, there is the good; this bill has a considerable amount of the good in it. But unfortunately, the bad is so bad that it simply outshines the good, it simply overcomes the good, it simply overshadows the good, to the point where the good is almost irrelevant because the bad is so odiously bad.

I need to spend a couple of minutes on the ugly. It's not an easy kind of area to raise, but I think it's necessary. In talking to me about this bill, some people have used words that are quite strong. They've talked about it being odious and vulgar and purulent and a symbol or display of the entrenchment of things like—I have tried to look up other words, because I know this word is not a good word to use in the Legislature, but I couldn't find any other synonym. People are saying that this is a vulgar symbol or display of the entrenchment of cronyism into law, into legislation, and when the taxi drivers alluded in their discussion to certain parts of the bill having motives behind them, I think that's what they were talking about. They were talking about the suspicion that in fact certain members of certain communities, particularly those being represented by the sponsor of the bill—the minister—are ones who will benefit specifically from this bill, and that's something that—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I think we're treading in dangerous territory. You're impugning the motives of others. I really wish you'd try to tread carefully, OK?

**Ms. Horwath:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it was perceived to be that way, then I certainly withdraw anything that smacks of that kind of concern. I do have to say, though, that there is some concern over why the voices are not being heard in the industry that are quite concerned about the situation.

2010

I think the most frustrating of all, which is really part of the ugly, is that there is a way to fix this. New Democrats have formally given the government an opportunity to fix this. When government knows darned well that all of us—New Democrats, opposition Conservatives and members of the Liberal caucus—really support the good parts of the bill wholeheartedly, there's an opportunity, then, to have this bill passed, to have consensus on this bill, to have all-party agreement on moving this bill forward if, and only if, the government would sever off the pieces that remain so problematic.

In fact, my House leader, Peter Kormos, the member from Niagara Centre, who's keeping me company in the

House tonight, and who's here to speak to this bill as well, sent a letter to the Honourable Jim Bradley, the government House leader, just a couple of days ago, as New Democrats often do, trying to solve problems, trying to find solutions, trying to do the right thing for people—

**Mr. Kormos:** Trying to make peace.

**Ms. Horwath:** —trying to make peace.

**Mr. Kormos:** Trying to eliminate conflict.

**Ms. Horwath:** Right—trying to bring forward the practical solutions that can move things forward, that can make real changes in a positive way. So in that light, Mr. Kormos sent a letter to Jim Bradley asking that this bill basically be severed, that sections 1 and 4 of schedule A of Bill 169, which have been extremely contentious with the taxi drivers, be removed, be taken away and dealt with separately so that the remainder of the bill can be moved forward in a quick and judicious fashion.

This kind of proposal is one that's practical, one that's realistic, one that's reasonable, and I can't understand why it wouldn't be agreed upon. I wouldn't want to think that there are motives other than wanting to stick with the original bill. You know how it happens. You get your heels dug in and you say: "You know what? Hell, no, I won't go. This is our bill, and this is the way we're going to do it." Unfortunately, there are times that you really need to stand back from your initial stubbornness, your initial position, the trench you've put yourself into and say, "For the good of the industry, for the good of the House and for the good of moving something forward that will really help the people of Ontario, let's split this bill and let's vote on the pieces separately and we can move things forward in the province."

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lalonde:** I want to address some of the concerns that members of the opposition spoke about. Section 4, taxi scoopers: We are concerned about the safety of the people of Ontario. We have to stop the illegal activity that goes on. We have to protect consumers, not only in the GTAA area, but Bill 169 is for the whole province of Ontario. It is for Ottawa and Sudbury—it is for anywhere in Ontario—Niagara Falls, all those places. We want to make sure that the taxi industry is viable and strong.

I don't know if all members are aware that at the present time, a taxi plate at the GTAA—the last one that was sold cost \$465,000. Those people do an average of seven and a half trips per eight hours. They have to be parked in the compound in Toronto around Pearson airport. The other taxis in Toronto—there were 400 of those plates were issued by GTAA. Fifty of them have a licence for both Toronto and the GTAA. I want to make sure that people are aware that any taxicab from Toronto can go to the airport on a prearranged trip. They can pick up any passenger at the airport as long as it is prearranged and they pay \$10, because we have to recognize those people have paid a high cost for their licence plates.

Most of the time, scoopers are not insured. They're picking up passengers, driving them to Toronto at fares which are sometimes as high as \$180 for a trip from the



airport. This is why we have to stop scoopers. We've had members who had to pay \$80 to get here from the airport.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** It's always interesting to listen to the perspectives on this bill. The member was quite right; it's a good bill in some respects, as I said before, and it could be a bad bill in other respects; I think she said it was downright ugly in other respects.

One of the things that concerns me about the bill is the confusion aspect, that when you consider section 128, where the ministry can set different speed limits on the same road for different times of day, and different speed limits on different lanes on the same stretch of road over a period of time, I think you're going to end up with a very confused driver. Highway safety is probably predicated on the fact that if you have a confused driver, you're going to have a confused traffic place, and it's going to be a dangerous place to drive in. Why the minister would consider that this was a preferred or a proper way to proceed would give me some concern on that area.

The so-called scooping bylaw section, section 39.1 of the bill, basically creates a concern that there might be a treading on federal jurisdictions. I'm not constitutional lawyer, although I'm sure a constitutional lawyer would look upon this as a good source of income for an upcoming case, and might take some issue with the fact that a bill could be defined as having some federal or provincial jurisdictions, especially when you're operating on the GTAA, the airport, which is federal territory and federal jurisdiction.

**Mr. Kormos:** The member from Hamilton East has done it again: She has hit the nail right on the head. She's taken this bill and condensed it down into a very clear and concise demonstration of this government's inability to come to grips with the real issue.

Everybody disdains scoopers; that's the whole point. Down in smaller-town Ontario, our cab drivers have concerns about scoopers—non-licensed cabs. The fact is that the regional bylaws have not been very well enforced simply because of the resources necessary. The fact is that the Highway Traffic Act amendments aren't going to facilitate the enforcement, are they, Mr. Hudak?

**Mr. Hudak:** Not a bit.

**Mr. Kormos:** We have the regional bylaw now that permits the police to charge—I'll call them outlaw cabs, non-licensed cabs, and they're operating in university towns, they operate sometimes under the guise of delivery service. We have no qualms about busting unlicensed cabs picking up anywhere. But the concern that taxicab drivers have is that while the government was very clear in its protection of limousine drivers from competition by taxicabs who aren't licensed by the airport authority, the government ignored the very well articulated problem of limo drivers scooping taxi fares once they're in the city of Toronto. There was very clear evidence given of doormen, concierges, as has been mentioned, getting kickbacks for steering limo drivers to clientele. The government has missed the mark on that one; that's why we have these great concerns about section 4.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I appreciate the opportunity to engage, in a very short time, on the bill at this moment, and also to respond to a couple of items that were brought to my attention by the member from Halton.

One of the things he talked about was the inconsistency or the concern that he had about the different speed ranges that he was talking about in this particular bill. I want to bring to his attention that in 2002, 2003 and 2004, I introduced a bill called An Act to honour Carlie Myke and Brandon White by amending the Highway Traffic Act to reduce the rate of speed permitted on highways surrounding schools and to ensure traffic safety in school zones. Part of that bill was captured in this particular bill. What I want to tell him is that when I did the research for this particular bill, I found out that a couple of states have used a modified type of this bill, and they reduced child accidents by 82%. In Florida everybody automatically slows down in front of schools to, for us, 30 kilometres an hour. By having a consistent rate around all the schools, what we found through the research of the various states is that reduction was that drastic and that dramatic.

I think that the consistency the member was talking about, if it was applied across the province, would show that improvement. It becomes a culture. What happens here is, there is an expectation that what we will do is, in our driver education classes, make that part of the expected norm in the culture so that when you get into a car, the first thing you do is recognize that you're in a designated school zone and you drop the speed. That will reduce death and also major injuries around schools. That's one of the things I wanted to bring to his attention.

**2020**  
The second thing I wanted to do was thank the minister for introducing the other piece of the bill, which was to double the fines for speeding in construction zones. Quite frankly, I was very proud of that. It's very sure that people would see these ideas as progressive and impressive for the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time available for questions and comments. I return to the member for Hamilton East.

**Ms. Horwath:** I want to thank the members from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, Halton, Niagara Centre and Brant for their comments on my remarks. But I have to say, I suspect that the members of this Legislature have not taken the time to really review the outstanding issue with the taxicab drivers. I know what it's like. People are getting angry and there's tension and there's anxiety, so you hunker down and you weather the storm.

This is not a time to weather the storm. This is a time to get out there and get familiar with the issue. I raise that because I fear that the characterization that was brought by the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell on this scooping issue was not quite right, because what he assumes in his remarks, then, is that the limousine drivers who are from the airport part of the industry have these massive expenses for licensing their cabs, and yet somehow the value of licences in the Toronto industry, in the



city industry, are not relevant. But they are relevant because they have extremely high values on those licences as well.

It shouldn't be a matter of who pays—and certainly there is a differential. There's no doubt about the fact that there is a differential. But in the way that this member talked about the fact that there might be seven or eight or maybe 10 opportunities for a limo driver to be able to have a fare, similarly he's saying that it's OK to have the queuing up of taxis. In effect, those cabs will be reducing the amount of fares they'll be able to have a day on their shift, because they'll be queuing up in the airport, and they'll have to pay 10 bucks to boot for the privilege of queuing up at the airport. And that is one of the problems with this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

*Applause.*

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** Thank you very much, my friends from the third party. It's great to be here this evening. Certainly, my friends from my caucus, they're always, always supportive and excited when I get on my feet.

We had the opening this evening on this debate from the minister and the parliamentary assistant, my esteemed colleague from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Before I make my comments and get into the bill, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, my neighbour, for coming to my riding not long ago to look at our highway issue. Being the parliamentary assistant, he took the time, and that's what it's all about, these colleagues taking the time to help us out and to help us understand when problems exist, to bring them back, and certainly to work on them.

I'd like to quote the Minister of Transport. When I heard this quote, I thought to myself, "We have to do something," and I think we are doing something with this bill. It's addressing issues that relate to a transit system that will bring us a transit system into the 21st century. It's looking at a safer transportation network for all, and for all throughout Ontario. It's also easing congestion on our roads. There are certainly important parts of this bill that will do just that, ease the congestion. But I want to get back to the words of the minister: "While Ontario's roads are the safest in North America, they are not safe enough, not when 15,000 people were killed or injured in the last five years while crossing the road. The transit and safety bill introduced today"—he was speaking February 21—"would protect the most vulnerable people in our society—children and seniors—by targeting some of the worst driving offences."

Being from the riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh, although my esteemed colleague from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell has a little bit down to the very east of this province, I can say that my riding is right at the east end. I have the opportunity of doing a lot of driving. I try to take the train. Certainly, here in the city I take public transit. I'm not afraid at all of going down into the subway and taking public transit, and supporting our taxi drivers. But I've had a lot of opportunity to drive

Highway 401 between my riding and my home at Long Sault and Toronto. I can say I probably have seen every problem in the book when it comes to the issue of safety on our roads. That's really what I would like to speak about tonight, to bring up some of the ideas from this bill that I think are certainly worthy of expressing again. Many of my colleagues have expressed their points from the bill this evening, and I would like to just express some others from the vantage point of where I am or where I was in the community.

I'm excited about the enhancements that this bill has for safety at school crossings. I spent 32½ years in a classroom and had an opportunity of teaching in the city of Cornwall and into the rural area. I can say, with the school crossing guards—a group of individuals who work in our community, who step off the curb every day thinking, "Am I safe? Will my children whom I escort across those intersections be safe?" I think this bill requires drivers to remain stopped at school crossings until children and crossing guards have left the half of the roadway where vehicles are travelling. It requires school crossing guards to display the stop sign until all children have left the crossing. That's important. These individuals receive very little recognition.

**Mr. Kormos:** Very little pay.

**Mr. Brownell:** I just heard from the third party, "very little pay," but I'm talking about the recognition and the support from those people who travel on our public highways. I've heard stories of the windows being cranked down and obscenities being expressed, just disrespect for school crossing guards, so I think that's important.

**Mr. Leal:** What about the new jobs in Cornwall today? Six hundred and fifty jobs.

**Mr. Brownell:** Six hundred and fifty new jobs in the city of Cornwall today—a great announcement, yes. We've been working hard down there on jobs. We've had some problems in the past, but we are working hard down there to overcome those problems.

Getting back to the bill here, I would like to say too that just recently I had an opportunity to go over to Davenport Public School here in the city to take part in a diabetes education program in the school. I was travelling up one of the streets and there were many, many speed bumps along that street, speed bumps that I know municipalities would love to have. We will be lowering speed limits with traffic calming and giving all municipalities the authority to set 30-kilometre-per-hour speed limits where traffic calming is in place. Currently, the authority for this is only in Toronto, and I know that municipalities will be quite in favour and quite supportive and excited about this. I spent 14 years in municipal government in the township of Cornwall and the township of South Stormont, and there certainly have been community groups in the municipalities I served seeking these opportunities to have calming in their communities.

**2030**

The third thing I'd like to express here, and I can talk from personal experience, is the enhancements in con-



struction zone safety. While my daughter was attending college, to have some financial support, although I was there every bit of the way to support her in her efforts at college, she came home to work. For a couple of summers she worked as a traffic control person. She wanted to do this, and I've heard she was very good at it. I saw her doing it. But every morning when she left my house, I was very concerned, very concerned about her work along those highways, especially along the 401. They were paving a long section between Cornwall and Morrisburg in my riding on the 401, and she was a traffic control person on that strip of highway for an extended period of time. She told me many times about how close a vehicle had come to her. She was holding her sign one day and a truck passed, and it was that close to the sign that she was holding.

I have no problems with seeing the doubling of the fines for speeding, creating offences for disobeying traffic control persons and allowing all municipal councils to delegate authority to staff to set speed limits in municipal construction zones—extremely important. I can state from experience that this is an area that needs an increase in fines. That will indicate to those who are driving on our public highways that these people are there to be respected, people like my daughter Jennifer, who spent those two summers doing what she really wanted to do and doing a good job at it. I was quite proud of her. She came home every evening quite exhausted, because these were long days and very physically dirty projects she was working on because of the asphalt and whatnot, but she really expressed to me safety at that time. When I had the opportunity this evening of getting up to speak, I thought to myself, "I'm going to comment about her work," because she expressed that to me a number of years ago. It's something that has never left my mind, because we were always concerned about her safety.

There are a few other things I would like to comment about too. I am not from northern Ontario, I'm from eastern Ontario, but to my northern Ontario colleagues—I see we have the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan here. I know that the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and the member from Sault Ste. Marie, David Oraziotti, have talked to me about the enhancements to winter driving safety in northern Ontario with the studded tires. I remember way back, I think it was in 1969, having studded tires on my first car.

**Mr. Kormos:** What was it?

**Mr. Brownell:** It was a Buick Skylark.

**Mr. Kormos:** What year?

**Mr. Brownell:** 1969.

**Mr. Kormos:** Brand new?

**Mr. Brownell:** Brand new. I also helped my father buy one too.

Promoting any enhancements to safety in our province is essential, is important, and this opportunity in northern Ontario, to my colleagues up there, is going to be something you're quite excited about. As a southerner, as a southeasterner, I know that our roads can sometimes get

pretty bad with ice and snow and whatnot, but I know you have far, far greater problems in the north with regard to driving conditions, and the use of studded tires will certainly help there.

There are some other things here: enhancements to driver education and recovering the cost of demerit point interviews. Those drivers who accumulate nine demerit points must attend interviews with driver improvement counsellors. Right now, there is no cost to the drivers, and we're proposing a fee to recover that.

Those are a few of the ideas I'd like to express tonight. I'm delighted to have had this opportunity because I've wanted to talk about road safety, road safety in construction zones, speaking from experience.

I'm very pleased and I just hope that we have support for this bill from all parties in the House and that we can get this through, move on, and move on to many other things that we're looking at as a government.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Hudak:** I'm pleased to respond to my colleague from one of my favourite-named ridings in the province of Ontario—but I always have to make sure I'm careful with it—Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh. Congratulations on the new jobs coming to the community as well. To Cornwall, did you say?

**Interjection:** Yes.

**Mr. Hudak:** Six hundred new jobs. If Jim Brownell lured those jobs to Cornwall, then he deserves congratulations on single-handedly bringing those 600 jobs to the community.

I always enjoy the member's comments. Obviously, there are some things he spoke about in Bill 169 that members of the PC caucus have also spoken in favour of. The member did not get into the scooping issue. A number of the opposition members have shown significant concern about the approach the government is taking and what appears to have led up to the decision to include that particular change in the bill. Colleagues here have spoken to that and the minister has talked about it as well, though I'm not always sure that we had the entire story presented to the chamber. Nonetheless, I have an opportunity shortly to give further some comment on the anti-scooping issue, as well as other parts of the bill. But as I said a bit earlier, it's always a pleasure to listen to the presentation of the member from Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh.

I had a chance to visit Morrisburg on a number of occasions when I was tourism minister. In fact, I think we had crossed paths at that point in time. Who would have known that a couple of years down the road he would be bringing 600 jobs to Cornwall?

**Mr. Kormos:** I too listened carefully to the comments made by the member for Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh, Mr. Brownell, on the matter of Bill 169.

As I've indicated, and as our critic Mr. Bisson has indicated, the bill contains stuff that we support. It is regrettable that the minister persists in his refusal to heed the concerns of primarily Toronto taxi drivers. Frankly, I don't know if it's an issue in Ottawa with taxi drivers and



the airport. I don't think it is in London, Ontario. There just isn't the amount of traffic to and from the London airport, or Windsor, and certainly not in northern Ontario. Heck, there are no limos at the Sudbury airport or the Timmins airport.

2040

We understand how the bill creates a Highway Traffic Act offence out of a breach of, effectively, a historically municipal bylaw for scoopers in smaller-town Ontario like Welland, like Thorold, like St. Catharines, but it doesn't address the legitimate concern of taxi cab drivers. Our concern is that once this bill is passed, with section 4, those cab drivers are never going to be given any attention whatsoever, that they will have gotten short shrift. That's why we pleaded with the government to sever sections 1 and 4, because section 1 is related.

Let this bill pass with speedy passage: Send sections 1 and 4 back to committee for further hearing. If the amendments are there that would satisfy the taxi cab drivers, that created a parallel regime for them, the New Democrats would endorse speedy passage of that as well.

**Mr. Levac:** I would ask that the members opposite consider very carefully the safety features in this bill. Within the scope of those safety features, I would say that the bill itself is an extremely important piece of legislation for the people of Ontario, as pointed out by about five or six different private members' bills, in allowing us to encapsulate some of those great ideas and putting them in for the prosperity of those of Ontario.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** It's always a pleasure to respond to the member from Stormont-Dundas—is it Chateaufort?

**Interjection:** Charlottenburgh.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** There too.

The county of Dundas was the site of the first-discovered McIntosh apple. It was a chance seedling found on the farm of John McIntosh in 1886, 1887, somewhere in there, and being a bit of a horticulturalist, John MacIntosh grafted that seedling, and of course the McIntosh apple has spread around the world. It was first found on that site.

Actually, I saw that old stump. It was a rotten old stump and it's gone now, but it was the original McIntosh tree. I saw that in the early 1960s, the same way the Granny Smith apple was found on Granny Smith's farm in Queensland, Australia.

None of this has anything to do with this bill, but it's interesting, I thought. Being an apple person, I thought—

**Mr. Levac:** How are the frozen pies?

**Mr. Chudleigh:** The frozen pies are wonderful. We had a great crop this year, and the frozen pies are doing well. I encourage you all to have some for Christmas dinner and Sunday dinners and whenever else you need a good dessert.

The member spoke knowingly and eloquently about this bill, and he made some points about the crossing guards. I don't know why someone would hurl obscenities at a crossing guard who is protecting our youth. That certainly doesn't happen in my community; I've never

heard of that happening in my community. My sympathies to the member if it happens in his. I thought it was already a rule that you never enter the intersection until the crossing guard has left the roadway and stepped back up on the curb. I thought that was the law of the land as it now sits; I didn't realize that wasn't. That's certainly the way that most of the traffic that I've ever seen going through near a crossing guard treats a crossing guard.

My time ran out. I spent too much time on apples.

**The Acting Speaker:** Or not enough.

The member from Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Brownell:** I just want to thank the member from Halton, just before I get into my wrap-up, for bringing up the idea that the McIntosh apple originated in my riding, Dundas county. Absolutely: That's why we're so proud of our farmers in Stormont, Dundas and Charlottenburgh, because they've continued the work that John McIntosh started way back in the 1800s.

As I said in my remarks, this bill will bring a safer transportation network to Ontario. I have spoken on the idea of making those roads safer, making those people who work on those roads feel more comfortable as they work. It's also a bill that is going to ease congestion for all road users. We certainly know of gridlock, and those opportunities we have in Ontario now to enhance opportunities of moving people. I really didn't have a whole lot of time to speak on that, but it's certainly going to ease congestion, and it's going to create a transit system here in Ontario that will reflect the 21st century. I know that the honourable Minister of Transport and his parliamentary assistant have been working hard on many issues related to safety, to a system, to easing congestion. It's not easy, but they tackled some of the big issues. They put these big issues into a bill that I think is certainly worthy of supporting by all sides of this House, and I certainly hope that happens.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Hudak:** I'm pleased to rise to give some further comment on Bill 169 as part of third reading debate on this legislation coming from the Ministry of Transportation. I had the opportunity to provide some so-called two-minute hits, some brief comments, tonight, but I'm pleased to get into the bill in some greater detail on its third reading debate.

I did want to note, though, to my friends from Halton and Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh, that they didn't even note the coincidence that John McIntosh found the first McIntosh apple. I mean, what were the odds of that? I thought that was funny. Come on.

*Laughter.*

**Mr. Hudak:** Thank you. Somebody is paying attention. It is quite a coincidence. But that's history for you. Timely coincidences, Mr. Speaker, from whom I won a smile. Good stuff.

There are a number of things Bill 169 will do:

—increase penalties for cars that ignore pedestrian crossings



—double speeding fines in construction zones to better protect highway construction workers. I'll get into some of these in a bit more detail.

—enforce high-occupancy vehicle lanes to encourage car pooling and transit use

—give police more power to clear accidents and spills faster

—create new offences for flying vehicle parts that can cause serious injury or death to highway users

—improve daily commercial vehicle inspection standards by requiring truck drivers to check for more than 70 itemized defects daily, up from the current 23.

One item that's come up for some interesting debate, and I'll talk about it a bit more, is the use of—

**Mr. Leal:** What about the new jobs in Cornwall?

**Mr. Hudak:** The member said something about the new jobs in Cornwall. I did not hear the announcement. I've been tied up in the Legislature today. What were the new jobs or what kind of business?

**Mr. Leal:** A good business—outstanding—full of confidence in the folks of Cornwall.

**Mr. Hudak:** Well, it's all very nice news for Cornwall, and I'm sure that those folks looking to get those 600 jobs will be listening to the Bill 169 commentary tonight.

—allow the use of studded tires on vehicles in northern Ontario: We'll get into that a bit more. I'm curious for some better understanding of where the dividing line lies.

**Mr. Kormos:** If they cause no harm, why not?

**Mr. Hudak:** Fair point.

—allow land to be dedicated for new carpool lots and transit stations during planning stages. I haven't heard much debate about that item in the bill. The member for Brantford is a very big supporter of that.

**Mr. Levac:** That was one of my first duties as an MPP.

**Mr. Hudak:** Was that a private member's bill?

**Mr. Levac:** I got a carpool lot.

**Mr. Hudak:** There you go. Carpool lots are important, certainly, for those that are carpooling or taking public transit, and the member for Brantford is a big supporter of carpool lots. He talked about the fact that one of his first accomplishments for Brantford was establishing a needed carpool lot.

—improve transit commute times by allowing transit vehicles to pre-empt traffic signals, to lengthen a green light or change a red light to green sooner. Again, not a great deal of debate about that item in Bill 169. Maybe that will come up a bit later.

Probably the most contentious item on the docket on Bill 169, to which I still have not received a satisfactory answer from the Minister of Transportation or his parliamentary assistant or really any member opposite, and that is the scoopers law. As my colleague from Niagara Centre said, it's in section 4 of the bill, and also section 1 would need to be reviewed in addition because it's referred to.

## 2050

Let me describe it a bit more. Basically, the bill, if passed, creates an offence to punish scoopers: illegal taxis that pick up passengers from Pearson International Airport only. Unscrupulous operators have been known to charge unsuspecting passengers for a trip downtown. Under the new law, the driver, the person who arranges a ride or the taxi owner can be fined from \$300 to \$20,000. Substantial punishment; \$20,000 is a lot of money, and that's what the new fine would be. The failure to pay could result in licence suspensions or plate denial at renewal time.

Let me get to a bit of the content, then, as part of my remarks on Bill 169. Before I do that, actually, I've looked at some of the thoughts brought forward during committee hearings. One I always enjoy hearing from is the Ontario Trucking Association; David Bradley representing the OTA. It's certainly a group that I've worked with quite closely on issues like expanding border crossings at Fort Erie and the mid-peninsula corridor, among other issues.

Mr. Bradley had a number of helpful comments on the bill and makes one very important point. First, the helpful comments: "First, with regard to speeding, we"—meaning the OTA—"support the introduction of variable speeds. We support the increased fines and penalties for chronic speeders. We approve of and support increasing fines in construction zones. All of those are good measures. The difference in terms of whether they will be symbolic measures or whether they will be effective, in our view, has to do with enforcement, and the level of enforcement of speeds on the 400 series of highways is inadequate," in their view. He goes on, on a very, very important point, because, quite frankly, Bill 169 will not be worth the paper it is written on unless the proper resources are at the disposal of our police forces. Certainly, we've heard all kinds of promises from the Dalton McGuinty government that they are going to hire 1,000 additional police officers, but to date—and I'll ask the member for Halton if I'm right. To date, has there been a single new police officer hired?

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Not one, to my knowledge.

**Mr. Kormos:** No.

**Mr. Hudak:** Niagara Centre agrees, so I think we have—

**Mr. Leal:** There are five or six new ones in Peterborough.

**Mr. Hudak:** The member says there have been some hired in Peterborough, but my understanding is the application process is just currently happening. So I'm not clear how Peterborough would have been able to leapfrog the application process. But here we stand tonight, October 26, and we're past the halfway point of the Dalton McGuinty government and still not a single police officer has been hired to patrol the 400 series highways to help enforce Bill 169, if passed, and certainly the gun crime that has plagued the city of Toronto—

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Serious.

**Mr. Hudak:** Serious gun crime; in fact, terrifying.



**Mr. Chudleigh:** Unprecedented.

**Mr. Hudak:** And unprecedented gun crime that we've seen in the city of Toronto. Not a single officer has been hired to attack any of these very, very serious concerns. In fact, they've announced the 1,000 new police officers so many times, and reannounced it and reannounced it, they're up to about 7,000 officers now. But in reality, not a single new police officer is patrolling the streets and it remains one of the highlight broken promises of a regime well known for its broken promises.

Certainly, in Niagara—speaking about the western part of Niagara, the southern part of Niagara, where the roads are quite long—sometimes the back roads don't have the attention that they require from police officers. It's a complaint we deal with in the constituency office on a regular basis, that there weren't enough police officers to attend the scene of a crime. I know that in the Niagara region new police officers would be received very, very well, but there has been some criticism from the chief and from some local municipal leaders saying that the government's commitment is absolutely inadequate. So we will see what happens with the new police officers, if they ever do arrive. But Mr. Bradley will make the point, as he did there at committee on Wednesday, September 14, that no matter what the positive provisions may be in Bill 169, they won't be worthwhile unless they actually are enforced and backed up by real resources.

I think my colleague from Halton was talking about the gun crime here in Toronto. What are we up to now? I think 44 homicides in the city of Toronto, which is a sad record.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Mostly young people.

**Mr. Hudak:** Mostly young people, cut down in their prime, let alone the young people and senior citizens who are terrified to walk about in the city of Toronto. We have seen an extremely and sadly inadequate response. It's been the summer of the gun in Toronto and a summer vacation for Premier Dalton McGuinty.

There was some announcement the other day, but if I understood it correctly, it was more or less just moving some police officers from one area to another, robbing Peter to pay Paul, if you will, and not actually increasing the number of police officers who are there on the job, on the beat.

Mr. Bradley had some very insightful comments, but I think that one principle I wanted to enforce is making sure that the enforcement ability is actually there to back up the provisions in Bill 169, if it passes.

Things like increasing penalties for cars that ignore pedestrian crossings are all well and good, and I think that aspect of the bill will be welcomed by the vast majority of Ontarians, particularly pedestrians. But if there aren't the police officers there to enforce that provision, one wonders, why pass the bill if you don't have the officers there to enforce it?

Doubling speeding fines in construction zones to better protect highway construction workers: I think I recall this as being part of a previous bill by the Pro-

gressive Conservative government. It's an initiative we had brought forward as well. I could be wrong, but it is my recollection.

I've always enjoyed the signs when I'm travelling in the States—I don't know if "enjoyed" is the right word, but I found remarkable and effective the signs that would say, "Please drive slowly. My daddy works here. My mummy works here," to reinforce to us travelling through those zones that there are people who could be vulnerable to speeding cars as part of their job. I think it is very effective. My guess would be it's very effective in reducing speeding in those areas.

Enforcing high-occupancy vehicle lanes to encourage carpooling and transit use: It remains to be seen how effective this measure is going to be. Certainly, when I'm travelling back and forth to the riding and other parts of the province, I'm seeing some of these lanes being constructed along the 403, and I think maybe along the 401. There is a lot of roadwork happening that appears to be of this nature on the 401.

**Mr. Leal:** A lot of new work on the 401.

**Mr. Hudak:** But it remains to be seen if the new lanes will actually decrease congestion or increase it. Are they, in fact, going to be new lanes, or are they taking existing lanes and just turning them into high-occupancy vehicle lanes? There could be a concern that you're actually going to jam up those who are driving alone and that a significant number of people will actually have a longer commute to work or commute home to see their families.

I remember when I was living in Seattle they had the high-occupancy lanes and had a regular problem with people putting mannequins in their car to try to get down through those lanes.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** Well, I don't know what they were exactly. I didn't do it. I was a mere student at the time. There were about six of us crammed into the car to get from place to place. One of us had a car and the others didn't, so we were OK on that. None of us were mannequins, I can assure you, although sometimes on the way home we maybe felt like it. But certainly on the way there we seemed very much alive and well. But Seattle had that problem. It's actually been a few years and I don't know how they solved that problem, but, again, it gets to the enforcement issue.

**Mr. Kormos:** That lonely commute is going to get tougher and tougher.

**Mr. Hudak:** It could be. That's what I worry about. I'm an unabashed supporter of increasing highway capacity in the province of Ontario, expanding the 400 series of highways, moving the 407 farther to the east, building the mid-peninsula corridor, for example. I'm happy to see the Red Hill Creek Expressway moving forward as well. Continuing to expand—

**Mr. Levac:** The 24.

**Mr. Hudak:** The 24 in the Brantford area—another one.

I believe in increasing the highway capacity, not trying to strangle it down to make that long snake of



traffic that we see every day heading into and then out of the GTA even longer. So it remains to be seen how these HOV lanes will do. I think some jurisdictions have tried them and then rejected them. I guess we'll see.

Giving the police the power to clear accidents and spills faster: I spoke earlier about this. My colleague Steve Gilchrist, the member for Scarborough East whom we served with for a good 10 years, had promoted this project. He was described earlier as the fuzzy and huggable member for Scarborough East, Steve Gilchrist. I think he'll be pleased to see this provision continuing on this bill.

2100

**Mr. Leal:** Charming.

**Mr. Hudak:** The member for Peterborough wasn't here.

**Mr. Leal:** I was a city councillor, and he'd come to visit.

**Mr. Hudak:** OK. I was going to say, I didn't know if you were a fan of the late-night TV and watching the goings-on.

Allowing for the use of studded tires in northern Ontario—I'll ask this of my colleagues opposite: Is northern Ontario actually defined in legislation, is it the same boundaries as pertain to northern Ontario for other projects, like the northern Ontario heritage fund or the northern Ontario travel grant, or is northern Ontario left open to regulation and interpretation? We're not sure, and maybe we'll hear further debate or responses from the minister on the definition of northern Ontario.

But if the case is made that there's new studded tire technology that is not harmful to our roads, to our highways, then why limit it to northern Ontario? If you're driving down the back roads of Welland or Wainfleet, trying to get home late at night during a snowstorm, why wouldn't studded tires be made available to these families in my riding? I had the great honour of serving as the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I had a chance to drive across the northern highways. I was minister of the north for a while, and it was a fantastic experience. I can understand the unique conditions on those roads, the distances and the weather conditions, very well and can appreciate the importance of this measure. I certainly would hear about it from time to time when I was in the north. But again, if the description I hear from the government is true, that these tires are in no way harmful to our provincial roads or local roads, then why not allow them for use across the province of Ontario as a whole? That's not clear. If they do it by regulation, maybe eventually Fort Erie will be part of northern Ontario; I don't know. But perhaps during this debate we'll get a real answer on the northern Ontario issue.

My friend and colleague the member for Durham, Mr. O'Toole, is our transportation critic. You've seen him in action in this chamber.

**Mr. Kormos:** I sure have.

**Mr. Hudak:** No doubt, and he'd spice things up if he were here tonight. I could do an impersonation, but I

don't think I will. But I do have a press release from Mr. O'Toole regarding what members of the opposition have described as an offensive part of the legislation that we, the opposition members, have asked to be taken out of the bill, to be separated from the bill. Let the other good things of the bill move forward, but we want more discussion and an understanding of what the minister is trying to do in section 4 of the bill. This release is dated October 26, today:

"Durham MPP John O'Toole said today he will urge the provincial government not to pass a controversial new 'anti-scooping' law governing taxis in Ontario.

"Bill 169 was the subject of a protest"—in fact, many protests—"of taxi drivers at Queen's Park ... because it introduces new legislation against scooping fares. Fines would be as high as \$20,000 dollars," which seems to be extremely high for this type of bill and legislation. "In protesting Bill 169, the cabbies"—mostly Toronto cabbies—"warned that they do not have a level playing field because limousines can take fares to and from Pearson International Airport, while taxis can only drop people off at the airport and leave empty.

"The official opposition is asking that sections of Bill 169 affecting the taxi and limousine industry not be proclaimed until this issue" is resolved.

Mr. O'Toole has given some thought to this, obviously. He has a solution: In his view, "The issue should be resolved at the municipal level," through the Municipal Act or the City of Toronto Act.

**Mr. Leal:** Downloading.

**Mr. Hudak:** The member calls it downloading. Some might actually call it giving municipalities more authority. You guys try to walk both sides of that argument.

The other great concern that's been brought up with respect to the scooping law—in fact, I think some of the Toronto cab drivers brought that forward themselves—is the fundraiser that took place for the benefit of the Minister of Transportation by the limousine drivers.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Can you buy legislation in this province?

**Mr. Hudak:** The member asks a good question, and far be it from me to say. But to me the appearance is very, very unfortunate. Perhaps if the minister wanted to make sure that that appearance was no longer there, he would actually take these sections out of the bill, take a sober second look at them and bring them back, as Mr. O'Toole suggests, through a couple of other mechanisms to make sure that what's being brought forward as legislation is being brought forward because it's well thought out policy, and not for any other reason related to fundraising events.

Mr. Hillel Gudes made a very passionate presentation to the committee on behalf of the Toronto taxi industry. I would encourage members who have not had the opportunity to go ahead and read that and give some sober second thought to the provisions of the bill that are particularly unappealing and come from a questionable birth. I think if we had a chance to look at them anew and look for other mechanisms to fix them, we'd have a good



Bill 169 and would find a way to better address the limousine and taxi issue with respect to Pearson International Airport.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Kormos:** The member for Erie–Lincoln raises an interesting point about the exclusive multiple-person-vehicle lane. The people who are reflecting on supporting these provisions maybe should test it or check it against real life. I come up that QEW darn near every day. The trucks restrict themselves to the second and third lanes—the middle lane and the right-hand so-called slow lane—so think about what's going to happen. One of the problems on the QEW and 400-series highways, as you well know, is people who are in the wrong lane and are not going fast enough in that lane. This is going to force, in my view, a considerable number of people from the passing lane, where they should be, into what have become the truck lanes, which are the middle lane and the third lane, the slow lane. The volume of those trucks is incredible. They're big. The truckers are under incredible pressures. I'm not going to criticize individual truckers, but you and I both know, and Mr. Hudak certainly knows, there's nothing scarier than being in that lane and seeing a truck slowly drift over into your lane because the driver's been driving for a big chunk of time, trying to grind out a buck to support his family. That's pretty scary stuff, especially at 110, 115, 120 kilometres an hour.

I'm concerned. The government says it wants to enhance safety, and I understand the rationale for the driver-plus-at-least-one-passenger type of proposition. It's very California. But, quite frankly, the lay of the land in California is far different than it is here in terms of the number of lanes available, the types of commuting and the types of traffic you see on their highways. That QEW from Fort Erie up to Toronto, up to the Gardiner, is all about bringing truck traffic in from the United States to travel on the 401. You'd better be very careful.

**Mr. Levac:** I just wanted to read a list of people who have expressed support for this bill in second reading. The member from Waterloo–Wellington, the member from Nepean–Carleton, the member from Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant, the member from Simcoe North, the member from Oxford, the member from Erie–Lincoln, who just spoke, the member from Oak Ridges, the member from York North, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, the members from Leeds–Grenville, Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford, the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey, who is also the leader of the official opposition, and the members from Simcoe Grey and Kitchener–Waterloo have all supported the bill in second reading, which means to me that they're planning to vote in third reading for the very same purposes.

Except I would say one thing, in fairness—I could probably make a list of other people in favour of the bill—and that is that the job of the opposition is to point out where they believe some changes should be made, could be made or will be made, in fairness to the oppor-

tunities, and that is exactly what they're supposed to do. I just wanted to make sure that everyone was quite clear that that number of people have voted in favour of this bill and have indicate that, as far as I can see, they're planning to vote for it again. So we've got first reading passage, second reading passage, and now we're looking at whether or not the House in this Legislature deems the legislation good enough to pass.

Hopefully, the safety measures that are outlined, which they're all supporting, would have the capacity to indicate that we want safer roads in Ontario, that the Highway Traffic Act continually—and I want to repeat that—continually needs review, update and improvement for the safety of the citizens we serve. Anything we can do in this Legislature to do that, we should be compelled to do.

**2110**

**Mr. Chudleigh:** I'd like to point out to the member opposite that second reading is a reading in principle and then it goes to committee. In committee hearings, some of the things in the bill that we have concerns about should be changed, or we might think they'd be changed. This bill came back for third reading, and very few of the concerns that we expressed in second reading, although we passed it in principle—nothing had been changed in committee. I believe all of the amendments we put forward were defeated. So the vote, when it comes on third reading, will not be a vote on principle; it will be a vote as to whether or not we think this bill is a proper piece of legislation to help govern the people of Ontario.

One of the things in this bill that gives me great concern is the tire studs that you're putting on to tires in northern Ontario. Do you know what that does? That splits Ontario into two groups, and when you split Ontario into two groups, you're disenfranchising, you're against one part of the province, and that's a very dangerous precedent to set in any piece of legislation throughout Ontario.

The northern ridings—yes sure, they've got snow up there, but they also have snow in southern Ontario. You drive in the snowbelt, from Caledon to Owen Sound and out to Lake Huron, and every night you get snow out there, every night the roads are packed, every night you're driving over a thin layer of snow. Studs in tires would be a very good thing to have. It would be a safety thing to have. It would make those people in southern Ontario equally as safe on the roads as they will be in northern Ontario.

That was a small amendment that you could have brought in during committee hearings, but no, this government didn't. This government doesn't believe in listening to other people. It doesn't believe in making legislation better. It doesn't believe in trying to get along in a co-operative spirit. As pointed out by the member opposite just a few minutes ago, you almost suggest that we can be taken for granted. So I am greatly disappointed in your comments.

**Mr. Lalonde:** I just heard the member opposite from Halton. I can't understand when he says that this govern-



ment has not listened to the people. We have consulted the people, and the people of the north have been asking for permission to have studded tires for years. You people didn't want to listen to what the people up north wanted. Had you ever lived up north, you would see the difference in the conditions they have to live through every day during the winter. Studded tires are going to be part of this bill for the benefit and safety of all the people traveling in northern Ontario.

I just want to come back to one of the points that was brought to our attention by a member from the other side, from the official opposition. When they mentioned that our minister had a fundraiser organized by the limousine drivers of Mississauga, or the people who have licences from the Greater Toronto Airport Authority, that is completely false. This year, I was at the fundraiser, at which our Premier was the speaker. There could have been four drivers in attendance at that dinner. Last year, it was the same thing. True, they probably raised a certain amount of money, but are you not having those fundraisers with your leader? I'm sure every party is having them. So please, be fair with everyone. This fundraiser is run for your party, it's run for the NDP and it is run for the Liberal Party. And the people enjoy coming out. They don't have to be forced to come in and listen to what the Premier has to say. Very often, those people go there because they want to know if there are any new developments in the taxi industry.

**The Acting Speaker:** We return now to the member for Erie—Lincoln, and you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Hudak:** I appreciate the comments by all my colleagues in the assembly this evening.

The member from Niagara Centre and I have a similar viewpoint. We make that trip on a regular basis from Niagara to the city of Toronto for work. Quite frankly, a significant and growing number of my constituents, particularly in the west end of Niagara, are making that trip. I worry whether these high-occupancy vehicles lanes have been thought through. The member for Niagara Centre brought up some important points. I worry about highway capacity being squeezed and gridlock actually becoming quite a bit longer than exists today. Certainly Ontario is not California when it comes to highway capacity. It's a different situation, and I don't think it's a fair comparison for the government members to make.

I had referred a bit to the committee hearings. Mr. Hillel Gudes had come forward on September 14 and made a good point. He countered what government members have said. He said in response to some of the government members, "You're claiming that this is province-wide legislation. Can you show us one report, any research that says there's a scooping problem in Fenelon Falls or Elora or all those places? The scooping problem is contained to Toronto and the airport and maybe Mississauga.... Don't talk to us about province-wide. This is a smoke-screen." That's somebody in the industry.

He says also, "... it does not belong in the Highway Traffic Act. We heard that before during the day. It's a

licensing issue. Licensing issues are traditionally addressed in the Municipal Act."

"It does not belong in the Highway Traffic Act." We've heard that during the day. It's a licensing issue. Licensing issues are traditionally addressed in the Municipal Act," so it should be the same.

He also talks about the heavy penalty of the \$20,000 fine when it's only \$5,000 for probably a more serious crime, driving without insurance.

Mr. Kamul Trabulsey had come forward on the same day and had some very strong comments as well. My friend had just commented about the fundraiser. Mr. Trabulsey had a different view. Again, he's in this business. He said, "There was \$200,000 paid—I have the proof here in the newspaper—to Mr. McGuinty and the transport minister. The money had been issued after they had made the promise that they would do a law for the airport." They promised they would do this. So there you have it right in Hansard.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Kormos:** I'm pleased to finally get around to this. As you know, Gilles Bisson, our critic from Timmins—James Bay, is going to be doing the one-hour leadoff. Now I regret having asked Ms. Horwath to get unanimous consent to set that down because I'm enthused now. I've been provoked by comments from every part of this House.

First of all, I'm angry. I'm angry, because most of the ideas in this bill are Dave Levac's. Did the minister give him any credit? No, not one mention, not one gesture of gratitude. Dave Levac authors some of the good ideas in here. Dave Levac isn't responsible for the rather irresponsible failure to impose parallel restrictions on limo drivers that the government imposes on cab drivers. Dave Levac's not responsible for that.

**Interjection:** Pat Hoy.

**Mr. Kormos:** Pat Hoy's another one. But does Harinder Takhar give them any credit? No. Do they get any of the minister's salary? No. Do they have access to the minister's corporate credit card? No. Have they been to Bigliardi's, either of them, with the minister over the course of the last month and a half? No.

**Mr. Leal:** No, Swiss Chalet.

**Mr. Kormos:** Oh, we learned about the myth of Swiss Chalet. Don't bring that up, Mr. Leal. Remember the quote? "It was the rare occasion that I indulged in the luxury of Swiss Chalet," Dwight Duncan says, and when I got the phone call from the Premier's office, why it's only a few days later that the \$70 steaks are exposed. So, please, don't bring up Mr. Duncan's shortcomings. He would not be pleased with you, Mr. Leal, for having something generated and provoked in another observation about gluttony of the highest order in the most expensive restaurants at the taxpayers' expense. Mr. Leal, I insist. Your job is to protect Mr. Duncan, not to continue to subject him to the vicious attacks on his abuses of his budget. Mr. Leal, I caution you. Duncan has a temper, and you will suffer the wrath of it, should you continue to bring up his expenditures.

**Interjection.**



**Mr. Kormos:** But far be it from me to censor you—as Mr. Leal gets himself back into Hansard with yet another interjection.

I can't believe these people, Speaker. They're supposed to circle the wagons around their own. They're supposed to protect them rather than bringing up these issues. We had almost forgotten about Duncan's \$70 steaks in Brussels. We almost forgot about the Twix bars and the \$9 bottle of Diet Coke. I mean, come on: You eat \$70 steaks, and then you try to compensate by saying, "But give me the Diet Coke, and no cream in the coffee"? I'm one of those myself; I acknowledge it.

2120

Look, I want to talk about the studded tires, because I'm intrigued. I have no doubt that the manufacturers of studded tires say that they won't cause damage to the road, because they clearly want to expand their market. I similarly am convinced that studded tires improve traction and create safer winter driving. I have no doubt in saying that. Understand, though, that using studded tires, just like using snow tires, in areas where the roads are primarily dry and asphalt doesn't enhance your safety; it doesn't. They're useful only in the ice/snow conditions that they're designed for. So there's some trade-off there.

I'm not going to tell northerners not to use studded tires if the government is prepared to let them, but I am going to repeat the concern of the New Democratic Party about the fact that the claims of the manufacturers may not be as 100% sure as they appear to be. The manufacturer has an inherent interest in inflating their claim. So what I'm saying to the government is this: If and when municipalities in northern Ontario demonstrate, with the growth in use of studded tires, a similar growth in the state of road disrepair, is this government then going to accept some of the responsibility for that additional cost?

But I go one further: If in fact studded tires don't cause road damage, why is it that northerners have exclusive use of them? Because the argument, by only allowing northerners, was the acknowledgement that there was some damage or impact, therefore we minimize it by restricting it to the north. So you can bet your boots that every one of us from south of Sudbury and North Bay is going to be getting calls. I'll acknowledge that in Welland, winters are heavy snow and occasional ice, but relatively mild compared to the rest of Ontario. Heck, if you live out near the 401, if you're commuting in the Woodstock-London area—you know that stretch of 401, the killer stretch?—you would sure as heck want studded tires on some of those icy winter days, because there are whole areas of black ice. You get out there from time to time too, don't you, Speaker? I'm assuming its on the black ice that the studded tire, again, is going to give you a little more control. So if the studded tire doesn't cause damage, why isn't everybody in Ontario being allowed to use it? Or, in fact, do they cause damage?

I'm going to ask my friends down at Groff Tire on Niagara Street. I've been buying tires from them ever

since I've been driving. It's a long stretch of time. Mind you, they've been in business for 50 years; they celebrated their 50th anniversary this year. It's a second generation now running it. Mr. Hudak knows them as well. They're good, good people. Old Mr. Groff—and I don't say that in any deprecating way—but senior Mr. Groff has been a very active member of the Welland community, a very healthy entrepreneur. He provides significant employment.

It's a unionized shop, did you know that, Mr. Hudak? You buy tires at Groff Tire, you get them installed at Groff Tire on Niagara Street, and it's union working women and men who are installing your tires, who are balancing your wheels. That's no small part of the many reasons that I am a committed and absolute patron and customer of Groff Tire. I trust him. You can't get a better deal. They handle a wide range of top-name quality tires and are competitive with anything in Toronto or even the box stores. The sad reality is, though, that small businesses like Groff Tire are very much at risk because of the box stores, you know that, the Wal-Mart types of operations.

Now, I've got mud and snows, the proverbial all-season tires, on my pickup truck, but I use the pickup truck primarily—it's the old pickup truck. Gosh, it's about 10 or 11 years old, and it's got the mud and snow tires. I use the pickup truck during the summer, because with a pickup truck, the rear end gets pretty light. Mr. Hudak knows that. He's got one of those big—what do you call that, an Avalanche?

**Mr. Hudak:** Chevy Avalanche.

**Mr. Kormos:** It's a big pickup truck.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Kormos:** Please, Speaker, I'm trying to address this matter.

Tim Hudak's Chevy Avalanche—I'm envious, because it's a beautiful truck. You can't buy one of those for less than \$50,000 unless your wife works at General Motors and you get the employee discount. But it's a beautiful, beautiful truck, and I love it.

The fact is, though, that I've got my 11-year-old Chevy S-10, and it's going to have to do. But the thing is, I drive that in the summer because it has the light rear end, and I'm going to use my Buick in the winter because it's got the front-wheel drive. Some people say, "What are you doing?" Mind you, that's a 1991 Buick; that's 15 years old too. So I've got to take the 1991 Buick and get that on the road because it's front-wheel drive. So for the commute from Welland to Toronto, I use the Buick.

Groff Tire has the rubber on all these vehicles. The guy is just plain downright trustworthy. I'm telling you that it's worth the drive to Welland—it's just the like haircuts at Steve Baltich's in Welland South—if you want good quality tires, tires properly matched to your vehicle, because Groff knows their tires. They know their vehicles, they know the tires, and they know the type of driving that you do. Look, you can trust Groff Tire. If there's a problem, they fix it. If you're their customer, they take care of you. I tell you that we in Welland are

proud of that business. We're proud of their workers—hard-working, unionized workers—and we're proud of the many years of service—half a century—they've provided to folks across Niagara region. I exhort people to do as I do and buy from Groff Tire. They won't be disappointed.

I haven't talked to the Groffs or any of their staff about studded tires—certainly they haven't had them in stock—but I'm going to make a point of doing that, because if anybody knows about studded tires, Groffs do. They do their homework; they know their stuff.

You know that as House leader for the NDP, I wrote to Mr. Bradley on October 25. I wrote: "You know that sections 1 and 4 of schedule A of Bill 169 have been extremely contentious with taxi drivers. In fact, taxi drivers are mad as hell about these sections and the lack of controls on limousine drivers who 'scoop' fares from taxi drivers.

"At our House leaders' meetings on October 20, 2005, I proposed a severance of these sections from the bill so that New Democrats could then agree to a vote on the remainder of Bill 169 after one sessional day of debate. I make this same proposal to you again today.

"New Democrats cannot support section 1 and 4 of schedule A without similar and parallel restrictions on limousine drivers. A severance of these sections is necessary so that they can be sent back to committee for further consideration and amendment. Similarly a severance of these sections will facilitate the speedy progress of Bill 169 through third reading."

And "Sincerely yours," I wrote.

We pleaded with the government to please sever sections 1 and 4, so that the rest of this bill, which has stuff that we're not about to oppose, can proceed to become law. But we're not about to support a bill that contains sections that discriminate so thoroughly against hard-working taxi drivers here in Toronto and the Toronto area. It's just plain wrong, and New Democrats can have nothing to do with it. I tell you that and you can count on that one.

I'll have more to say when I'm able to resume the floor the next time this bill is called.

**The Acting Speaker:** It being 9:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 2130.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock Halton	Scott, Laurie (PC) Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement t	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)		

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)</b> Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b> Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b> Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Toronto–Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)</b> Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Parkdale–High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Whitby–Ajax	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b> Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)</b> Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Sarnia–Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph (L)</b> Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Vacant
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L)</b> Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse		
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)</b> Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L)</b> Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



## STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

### **Estimates / Budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Cameron Jackson  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Garfield Dunlop, Andrea Horwath,  
Cameron Jackson, Kuldeep Kular, Phil McNeely  
John Milloy, Jim Wilson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

### **Finance and economic affairs / Finances et affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Phil McNeely  
Wayne Arthurs, Toby Barrett, Pat Hoy, Judy Marsales,  
Phil McNeely, Carol Mitchell, John O'Toole,  
Michael Prue, John Wilkinson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

### **General government / Affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Présidente: Linda Jeffrey  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vic Dhillon  
Marilyn Churley, Vic Dhillon, Brad Duguid,  
Linda Jeffrey, Jean-Marc Lalonde,  
Deborah Matthews, Jerry J. Ouellette,  
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

### **Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Tim Hudak  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Andrea Horwath  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Michael Gravelle,  
Andrea Horwath, Tim Hudak,  
David Oraziotti, Ernie Parsons,  
Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,  
Joseph N. Tascona  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

### **Justice Policy / Justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bob Delaney  
Michael A. Brown, Jim Brownell, Bob Delaney,  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Frank Klees, Peter Kormos,  
Shafiq Qaadri, Mario G. Racco, Elizabeth Witmer  
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

### **Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bob Delaney  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco  
Donna H. Cansfield, Bob Delaney,  
Ernie Hardeman, Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin,  
Norm Miller, Tim Peterson, Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio  
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

### **Public accounts / Comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro  
Laurel C. Broten, Jim Flaherty, Shelley Martel,  
Bill Mauro, Julia Munro, Richard Patten,  
Liz Sandals, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

### **Regulations and private bills / Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Marilyn Churley  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong  
Gilles Bisson, Marilyn Churley, Kim Craiton,  
Kuldeep Kular, Gerry Martiniuk, Bill Murdoch,  
Khalil Ramal, Maria Van Bommel, Tony C. Wong  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

### **Social Policy / Politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Mario G. Racco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal  
Ted Arnott, Ted Chudleigh, Kim Craiton,  
Peter Fonseca, Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,  
Mario G. Racco, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O. Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

### **Electoral reform / Réforme électorale**

Chair / Présidente: Caroline Di Cocco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Kuldeep Kular, Norm Miller, Richard Patten,  
Michael Prue, Monique M. Smith,  
Norman W. Sterling, Kathleen O. Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

## CONTENTS

Wednesday 26 October 2005

### THIRD READINGS

#### Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005,

Bill 169, *Mr. Takhar*

Mr. Takhar .....	453
Mr. Lalonde.....	453, 457, 463, 472
Mr. Hudak .....	456, 466, 468, 472
Mr. Kormos.....	456, 460, 464, 467 471, 472
Mr. Leal.....	456
Mr. Chudleigh .....	457, 460, 464 467, 471
Mrs. Munro .....	457, 460
Mr. Martiniuk.....	459
Ms. Horwath.....	459, 461, 465
Mrs. Mitchell.....	460
Mr. Levac .....	464, 467, 471
Mr. Brownell .....	465, 467
Debate deemed adjourned .....	474

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

### TROISIÈME LECTURE

#### Loi de 2005 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne le transport, projet de loi 169, *M. Takhar*

M. Lalonde .....	453
Débat présumé ajourné.....	474





No. 11

N° 11

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 27 October 2005

Jeudi 27 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.





## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 27 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 27 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1000.*

*Prayers.*

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENT ACT (HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD REGIMENT MEMORIAL HIGHWAY), 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DES VOIES PUBLIQUES ET DES TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN (ROUTE COMMÉMORATIVE HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD REGIMENT)

Mr. Parsons moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act to name a portion of Highway 62 and Highway 33 the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway / *Projet de loi 5, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies publiques et des transports en commun pour nommer une section des routes 62 et 33 route commémorative Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to standing order 96, Mr. Parsons, you have up to 10 minutes.

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Before I start, I would like to introduce five guests we have with us in the members' east gallery who are representatives of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment: Joe Schamerhorn, Merv Rowan, Jacqueline Rowan, Bob Wigmore and John Sherry. I would ask you to join me in welcoming them.

I am quite convinced that in this country we do not flag-wave enough. We have the world's greatest country, and we do not recognize often enough the work, the pain and the sacrifice that has gone into making it that. So with this being the Year of the Veteran, I think this is an ideal opportunity for us to recognize on a permanent basis the cost that has been paid for our country.

We talk about our freedom, but freedom isn't free. Freedom required sacrifices by innumerable people, and I

would suggest the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment ranks at the top as representative of those who have made a difference, not just in our province or our country but in our world.

Another thing struck me too, I will confess, in the last few years. I noticed that one of the Legion magazines I received, which contained the notice of my own father's death, listed hundreds and hundreds of other World War II veterans who have left us. So as we watch us move from one generation to another, it becomes increasingly important that we establish a permanent provincial record in memory of the sacrifice of others.

There are many things I don't understand in this world, but two of them that have struck me relating to this issue are: I cannot imagine our world if the allies had lost; I cannot imagine what our lives would be like in this country and others; and I also cannot imagine being 18 or 19 years old in 1939 and making a decision to enlist, not knowing what that would ultimately entail, but knowing that these young people possessed so much love for their country that they willingly volunteered by the thousands. We don't appreciate that now, the sacrifice that was made by these young people.

There are innumerable individuals—I keep saying Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, but quite frankly we call it the Hasty P's and that is a sign of great affection—who have done heroic acts. But I believe that when they enlisted, they became heroes. At that instant in time, they were prepared to put the needs of their community and their province and their country ahead of their own personal lives. I would suggest that every individual who has ever been associated with the Hasty P's is a hero.

The history of the Hasty P's goes back a long time. In the year 1800, the first regiment of Prince Edward militia was raised. Four years later, the first regiment of the Hastings militia was raised. That's how far back in time this regiment has provided service to this country. In World War I, although we had regiments, the powers that be made the decision to break them into small numbered groups and send them overseas, so there is no record of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, but there certainly were hundreds and thousands of individuals who served in various numbered units and provided exemplary service to our country at the Somme, at Ypres, at Hill 70—it goes on and on.

When they returned, they returned to a country that did not significantly recognize the need to maintain healthy armed forces. It has been said by those far wiser than me, and I concur, that the best way to ensure peace is to have a well-prepared military. During some very

difficult years when our armed forces were neglected, there were dozens and hundreds of individuals who continued to train in the militia, with inferior equipment and inferior uniforms, at great personal sacrifice, so that when World War II broke out, we had in place the backbone of the forces we needed to defend our freedom.

In World War II, although the regimental name was Hastings and Prince Edward, there were individuals from all over the country who enlisted and became members of this regiment, but the vast majority came really from the Bancroft to Picton area, through the two counties. They served with great distinction overseas. They were involved initially in a poorly thought-out decision by individuals in Ottawa to send them to France ill-prepared. They returned to England and trained there, and then in July 1943 the Hasty P's landed in Sicily. At that time, they won eight battle honours. Battle honours are not given lightly or frivolously.

There is a book out by Farley Mowat called *The Regiment*, the regiment in which Mr. Mowat himself served. I'd like to read a quotation from him that refers to the beginning of the war, when they were ill-prepared. This country was ill-prepared for war, and he says:

"Yet there was one hidden weapon: one ignored by most of those who calculated the military strength, ignored by the very government itself—and yet a weapon infinitely more powerful, and more ready than any in the official armoury. It was called the militia."

After Sicily, this corps of individuals, plus the hundreds who came forward to volunteer, landed in Italy on September 3, 1943, and battled—and I don't use the word lightly—battled up the Italian peninsula, winning 20 battle honours at an absolutely fearful cost. In 1945, the regiment was then moved and took part in the liberation of Holland.

1010

There can be some question as to why we shouldn't pass this bill and name this highway. I can think of only two reasons. One is, as some may suggest, the cost. Given the sacrifice, that's not a point I'm going to argue; it does not merit an argument. The second one is that this bill may cause other regiments or squadrons to ask for the same thing, and my response is, I hope so. We need to be reminded daily—absolutely daily. This bill would allow for signs so that our young people, on the way to school, every day would pass signs reminding them of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment and what they've done. The regiment is not gone. This is not a dead regiment. There are people who continue in the militia to be ready, if needed.

We have so many attractions in our everyday life. There must be temptations to do other things. The individuals who devote their time now are heroes. Our young people need heroes. Movie stars and rock stars are not heroes. Heroes are those who formed our country and helped to preserve it.

At the end of World War II, it appeared that perhaps the days of the military were over, that they were no longer needed and that the Hasty P's were no longer

needed. I would like to read from the end of the book about what happened at the end of World War II when the troops returned from Europe. The preamble to this is saying that the regiment is dead, and Farley Mowat wrote:

"It was not dead.

"Nor, in the years ahead, shall it ever die and be forgotten. In the rock ridges of Hastings the men who go to the mines, and to the lumber mills, and to the clapboard cabins, are not dead. In the broad and vivid fields of Prince Edward the men who go to the lowing cattle; to the budding orchards and to the warm stone houses are not dead.

"And in the day of need these men shall come again, as they have always come, to build anew out of their flesh and spirit that entity which is the living symbol of their strength—that living home which is—The Regiment."

I ask for support to recognize the very reason why this Legislature is able to sit here today and debate in total freedom: because of the sacrifice, those who gave the supreme sacrifice, those who came back but came back different people, having seen things that you and I don't understand, and having had their lives and their families lives altered. The very least we can do as an honour to these individuals is to strike a living memorial to their contribution to our province.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** Thank you very much for giving me the time this morning. I want to commend the member for introducing this bill to the Legislature. I know Mr. Parsons to be a committed person of great passion when he takes on a cause, and I certainly want to indicate that we will be supporting this bill to rename portions of Highway 62 and Highway 33 the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway. I also want to welcome members of the regiment who are here this morning and thank them for joining us.

Mr. Parsons articulated how he felt that we don't do enough in this country, in this province, to honour those who have sacrificed so much so that we may be free, as he said, to debate matters such as this in this Legislature or anywhere else in this country. I can tell you that I share that point of view completely with the member. I want to indicate that we officially became a country in 1867, but it is said by many that we actually became a nation during the First World War at places like Ypres and Vimy, when the contribution of Canadians was seen and known by the entire world. It was there that we stood as a nation, united to fight against the forces of tyranny. Of course, that was continued in the Second World War. Our veterans have made such sacrifice. As Ernie says, they were boys. Many were not men when they went to war, they were boys who made a decision that they would sacrifice or be willing to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of others.

So it is clear that we do not enough. It is not about glorifying the act of war, because none of us does and none of those veterans does. I remember when I was a



boy that we used to go to the Legion parades, the Remembrance Day parades. My father was a veteran of World War II; he served in the SD&G Highlanders. You know, most of those men in those parades in those days were actually younger than I am today, and there were of course many older men as well who were veterans of the First World War. Nowhere in my riding are there any veterans of the First World War with us any longer, and there are only a handful in this entire country. But the men who walked in those parades walked with pride, not pride about war, but pride about serving their country, and they had every reason to be justified in that pride.

When I have the honour of joining the remaining veterans in those parades today as a member of provincial Parliament, many of those men are still there, but they're old men now. They're not young men any more, they're old men. They walk slower, they don't march with the same power and strength that they used to, but they still have that same pride on their faces of having served their country. That is something that I think we all need to take note of, because as those men slowly but surely leave us, we have to have these permanent memorials to their work and their sacrifice, not only in this province but in this country.

When I talk to those veterans, they know the tremendous risks that were taken when they enlisted for those battles overseas and their service overseas. But to a man, every one of them would do it again if asked to serve again because of the importance of defending freedom and liberty against the forces of Nazi tyranny.

As we enter constituency week, which will be Remembrance Day week, this House does not sit, and I know that members of this House on all sides will be visiting Legions and memorial services in their constituencies, because it's an opportunity for us—and I view it not only as an opportunity, but an obligation—to clearly state unequivocally our appreciation and our thanks for the sacrifice and the efforts they made for our sakes. No sitting member left in this Legislature could have been a veteran of either one of those wars, so it is our opportunity to thank them for something that we could not possibly understand in the way that they do, and the sacrifice they were willing to make.

I think it is important that I mention these very wonderful occasions when we put aside the partisanship of this House to draw together and be unified, as our men were in those wars, and say this is something that not only can we all support but we must support. As Mr. Parsons said, there are only a couple of reasons why anyone could oppose. When you look at the cost, how could we ever repay those people who were willing to make, and many who did make, that ultimate sacrifice, who have not marched in those Remembrance Day parades because they didn't come home?

1020

So not only on November 11 but every day of the year and in this, the Year of the Veteran, it is so appropriate for my colleague to bring this bill to the Legislature, and I certainly trust it will receive the support it deserves.

Speaking of the non-partisanship, I recall that last year I brought a private member's motion to this House, unanimously supported by this chamber, renaming a bridge in my riding after a police officer, Senior Constable Phil Shrive, who was killed in the line of duty. Again, on that day there was no partisanship. It wasn't a divided House, it was a House united, and I trust we will have that today as well.

I want to read a poem that was written by Major Alex Campbell, who was a member of the Hasty P's, as they are affectionately known. It's called Prayer Before Battle. Major Campbell wrote this during a lull in battle, and he was later killed in Ortona.

When 'neath the rumble of the guns,  
I lead my men against the Huns,  
'Tis then I feel so all alone and weak and scared,  
And oft I wonder how I dared  
Accept the task of leading men.  
I wonder, worry, fret, and then I pray,  
Oh God! Who promised oft  
To humble men a listening ear,  
Now in my spirit's troubled state,  
Draw near, dear God, draw near, draw near.  
Make me more willing to obey,  
Help me to merit my command,  
And if this be my fatal day,  
Reach out, Oh God, Thy guiding hand,  
And lead me down that deep, dark vale.  
These men of mine must never know  
How much afraid I really am,  
Help me to lead them in the fight  
So they will say, "He was a man."

As I said, that was written by Major Alex Campbell, a member of the Hasty P's.

If I can reiterate, this is only one small but important act, one small but highly symbolic and worthy deed on the part of the honourable member, to bring this matter to the Legislature so we can support it united and ensure that this highway—and hopefully, as time goes on, many, many portions of our highways—can be named in honour of such great people so that when my children, and grandchildren, if we're so blessed, and other people yet unborn travel the highways of this province, they will take notice and they will remember the great men who offered those sacrifices.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** I rise today and commend the member for Prince Edward–Hastings for the bill he has brought forward. The naming of a highway seems to me to be wonderful. I just wish that all of us could do even more than what he is suggesting, but this is a wonderful thing: the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway.

As has been said by other speakers, this is the Year of the Veteran. This is the year that so many people are starting to look back at the history: the history of the First World War, the history of the Second World War, of Korea and the police actions. It is a time when Canadians are starting to appreciate and understand, I believe, in a



way that they have not for a generation, the significant role that veterans and those who fought for this country have played, the role they have in our freedom, the role they have in our democracy, the role they have in the building of Ontario and of Canada.

It is wonderful to see this, because it was only some 10 or 15 years ago, when I was a relatively new member of the Royal Canadian Legion, when I was inducted into the Legion and marched forward and became an associate member, that many veterans there lamented that people had forgotten or were forgetting the sacrifice that so many of them had made. They talked to me about the kids not understanding in the schools any more, that the history wasn't taught, that they were afraid people would forget, that a generation or generations would go by and no one would remember about the Canadians' role in the Second World War, their fighting for freedom.

I'm very happy today with what has happened, because the federal government, the provincial government, school boards across the country, literally everyone, is starting to recognize these veterans for who and what they were. They are starting to recognize the sacrifices of those who died. They are starting to know of the great battles. They are starting to know how an entire continent was liberated.

As I said, it was about 15 years ago that I was approached by a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 10, Todmorden branch in East York, and was asked to become a member. I had really not given it much thought before that time, to tell you the truth. I had never really given thought to being a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, but I was eligible to be one because my father had been a soldier. I took them up on their offer and went there, and it has been a really remarkable experience to me throughout all of these years to go and sit with the Legionnaires, to talk to them about their struggles, about their dreams, about their goals, about their hopes, and to see even to this day, when the average age in my Legion branch is 83—that's the average age of those who were veterans of the Second World War. Some are older and a few are younger—some of those who were in Korea are a little younger than that—but the average age of those who actually put on a uniform and were full-fledged members is 83 years of age.

I've talked to them about their experiences and it has reminded me so often of things my father told me when I was a boy. He did not ever glorify war. He never told me much about too many of the battles or people who died, but he did talk about going to many places. He talked often about the Hasty P's—that's what he called them. I don't think I even knew that they were the Hastings and Prince Edward group; they were just the Hasty P's. He talked about them because he was in many of the same places that they were. He was in Sicily and Italy and France and North Africa and Germany, and he was there at the liberation of Holland. He spoke highly of the Hasty P's, about their bravery. He spoke about the liberation. He spoke about people who were thankful for what all of the Canadians had done.

It is ironic, I think today, that after the war he came back, and we lived in Toronto and Scarborough, but when he retired, he went with my mother to the Bancroft area, and they are still there. They went to the heart of Hasty P country. He lives today among and with many of those veterans. He goes to the Legion branch from time to time in Cardiff and in Bancroft to be with members who I'm sure served with the Hasty P's.

It is a fitting tribute today that the history of Canada be told. It is a fitting tribute that those who sacrificed will be remembered. It is a fitting tribute for those who carry the proud badge, the proud shield of the Hasty P's, that they continue to be recognized, that their regiment continue to not only exist but to flourish.

As the numbers grow smaller—and sadly, they do. Sadly, each year on Remembrance Day, when I go to the remembrance at either East York or the Beach—because in my community there are two competing ones trying to vie for the number of people. I wish I could get to them both, but unfortunately they are both held at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, and I alternate between them. But as I do, I see the identical phenomenon. I see men and women who are getting older, but they walk with the same pride. They walk with their heads held high.

The crowds on the sidewalks break out into spontaneous cheers. People are thankful and the people remember. The schools are again teaching about our veterans. This, in one small way, will go to help all of us remember the sacrifice of those young men and women all those many years ago, and the role the Hasty P's and all soldiers played in making this the great province and the great land we enjoy.

1030

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** It's a real honour to be able to speak to this bill for a few minutes, not only because it's so important to me and to the people of Ontario but also that part of the highway goes through my riding, so it's doubly important.

Just before I speak to the bill, I want to congratulate the member from Prince Edward—Hastings. I should also let the member know—I think it's in the second paragraph—that Sicily is not a country; it's part of Italy. When you say Sicily and Italy, I would hope that—

**Mr. Parsons:** When did that change?

**Mr. Rinaldi:** I just wanted to clarify that.

On a more serious note, I believe there is more perspective to this today. As you know, I'm an immigrant. I wasn't born in this country. I'm very fortunate that my father-in-law, who is a veteran, is still living and my father, who was a prisoner of war in Italy, is still living. My father-in-law clearly tells me about what they went through. The challenge is that I can't get my father to talk about it. My father lives in Canada, in Ontario. He's thankful for the work these folks did because he lives the free life we all enjoy. So it is difficult in a way, but on the other hand, it's a really happy ending because we enjoy what we enjoy today. That's a personal challenge I face, that I will probably never really find out what my



father went through when he was in Sicily. That's where he was captured, and it could have been this regiment. Nevertheless, the ending was great and we are all honoured to be here to talk about it.

The other thing I must say is that as I get older—I'm not that old yet—we tend to appreciate what these folks suffered during those days. You know what? As a young country, as a young province, we're not doing enough to remember what they did, and with initiatives like this, I know that my kids—I have six and a half grandkids—are going to appreciate it. I know they will because I know how much I appreciate parts of history that 10 years ago—that close, 10 years ago—I probably wasn't that interested in. I don't know if it's old age that makes you more interested. But we need to do more because we still have a very young country and a very young province and we need to do that. I'm delighted that Mr. Parsons brought this forward. I totally support it and I agree that we need to do more.

In the minute or so I've got left, yesterday I was privileged to represent this province in Kingston, where the seventh stop of the Memory Project Road Show took place. I had the pleasure of meeting a number of veterans who were bringing forward their stories, their artifacts, their memorabilia. This province invested about \$200,000 to catalogue, from about 500 of these veterans, their story, their history, their memorabilia. Our kids and grandkids are going to be able to flick on the Internet and get the whole story. I spent about two hours yesterday with my father-in-law. My duty was to represent the province. It's a good thing I went, because it was really enlightening to see these folks tell their story, bring in their artifacts. They were taking photographs so they could digitize them and put them on the Web. I believe the last stop is in Ottawa next week, but at the end of the process 500 veterans are going to be honoured forever.

What we're doing here today with naming this piece of roadway that we travel is just another piece of the puzzle. We, as legislators in this province, need to do a lot more. I look forward, during my tenure here in this Legislature, to do as much as we can to remember the folks who made us what we are today.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I too would like to commend the member for Prince Edward–Hastings on his private member's bill to name a portion of the highway in his riding, and to welcome to the gallery the members who came today.

The amendment has an honourable aim and recognizes the enormous contribution made by Ontario veterans. Veterans have contributed to their local communities, their country and to the cause of freedom and peace around the world. I always say there is not enough done in our country to recognize veterans and to remember. Bringing forward an amendment to the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act to honour the proud history of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment is a fine way to keep the memory of our province's veterans in the forefront of our minds.

As we approach Veterans' Week during the first week of November, we proudly wear the poppies that are sold

by veterans and their families. Speeches will be made in Legion halls and schoolchildren will gather in special assemblies. I know that I participate in the services in my riding for the entire week. The two minutes of silence on November 11 will be observed by the people of Ontario as they gather at the cenotaphs, cemeteries, public parks, city halls and places of worship to honour the memory of the Canadians who died in the world wars since Confederation.

Like the member from Prince Edward–Hastings, I encourage all Ontarians to recognize our military history long after Remembrance Day has passed. By naming these public spaces, we are making every day Remembrance Day. This summer in my riding—part of my riding includes zone F-4; some of the gentlemen in the gallery might know some members from my riding. They had a two-day celebration in Lindsay at the armouries—many municipalities had armouries back then. I also come from Mr. Sam Hughes's riding. He established the armouries there. They did a great display. They had two days and they had a great public response. They set up displays and taught the young people, and I thought it was a fabulous event.

My father, Bill Scott, was an MP from 1965 to 1993, representing the riding of Victoria–Haliburton, and was the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. He was always a strong advocate for veterans throughout his tenure in the House of Commons. My grandfather Scott fought in the First World War and we lend his uniform out to many places, on display, to help educate the public. Those two days in Lindsay brought back a lot of memories and they also gave us a chance to learn—it was the 109th Battalion that most of the members from my riding went to. Leslie Frost met the people from the Haliburton and Victoria areas over in Barrie at the training camp. After the war he decided to make Lindsay his home and then went on to be the MPP there and the Premier of Ontario. We have a great legacy in our riding and we like to share that as much as we can.

Also, to mention the other people who were involved in the Second World War, it was a total war. Everyone participated, with scrap metal drives and Victory Gardens; women went overseas and farmers left their farms and worked in some of the factories in our area and sent over supplies; they left the lumber camps also. I have 15 Legions in my riding—not just zone F—and I was happy to participate in the celebrations of all of them this year.

I'm pleased to see that through the reserve infantry regiment of the Canadian Armed Forces located in Prince Edward–Hastings, the legacy of proud military service is being kept alive. The citizen soldiers who train part-time as these local armies take their valuable free time to work hard throughout the year at the land reserve. They participate in rigorous training and may even risk their lives when called out on peacekeeping missions.

**1040**

The tradition of Canadian military service is not without its dangers. Approximately 650,000 Canadians served in World War I and nearly 69,000 died. In World



War II, a million Canadians and Newfoundlanders served in the Canadian Armed Forces, the Allied forces or in the merchant navy. More than 47,000 lost their lives. More than 26,000 Canadians served in the Korean War, and over 500 of those died. About 125,000 Canadians have served in peacekeeping missions since 1947, and more than 100 have died.

Not only would this act recognize the honourable contribution made by the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, which includes 31 battle honours for its heroism and valour, but it would become part of our greater duty to teach our young people to respect and revere the debt we owe to our veterans.

I want to thank the member for bringing this forward. He certainly has total support from our caucus. I am glad he has brought it forward, and I hope to see more of this in the future.

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** I should say to Mr. Parsons that I think you may have started a trend here today, because it's such a good idea. We are all going to want to name portions of our highways after regiments in our own ridings, and I think a very good thing that would be.

I had the honour just recently of welcoming, along with my colleagues from all parties, women veterans in this province here on Persons Day. I thought it was quite fitting, in this, the Year of the Veteran, that on Persons Day—I'm sure you will recall that there was a time when women weren't considered to be persons—we celebrated the fact that women did become recognized as persons, with all the rights and privileges that go with that, and we recognized the women veterans from both world wars.

We all have an opportunity to talk about our own parents and our own grandparents when we have an opportunity to talk about the importance of the incredible sacrifices that you made for our country—and indeed for freedom in the world—and about our own history. I am from Newfoundland. I talk about my grandfather, who is long deceased now, and the fact that he talked so little about the war. He was in World War I. We hear that a lot about veterans. You see such horror, that we can't even begin to imagine. His name was Frederick Emberley, and my mother, his daughter, is alive and kicking at 80, and doing well. He was a wonderful man and he was profoundly deaf. All I know is that the ship he was on was torpedoed and a lot his mates died. He survived and had injuries and was deaf as a result of whatever happened there. That's all I know, and that's all my mother really knows. We'll never know his experience.

I want to say that I understand when my colleague Michael Prue becomes teary-eyed when talking about the sacrifices that you made, because we know that we are so privileged. I feel so privileged. I've had a wonderful life. I've had a wonderful youth, and as I get older, my children and grandchildren have a wonderful life. We know it's because of your sacrifices, and we know that we cannot forget.

I think it was—I'm trying to find a quote here—George Santayana who wrote, "Those who cannot learn

from history are doomed to repeat it." It's your history that we have to learn from. We cannot allow, as we all get older and pass on—and it's happening to all of us here; we're moving on—that our young people, my children and my grandchildren, ever forget. I would say that it's even more critical these days when we see war on TV, and it looks like a video game with these smart bombs and "pooops" going off, and that's all we see. But you know. You were there, and you know the horrors of what really goes on, and that it is a tremendous sacrifice. The young people who die or are coming back from war now to the US and Britain and other places around the world with terrible injuries—it is a tremendous sacrifice.

I don't think I've ever met any bigger pacifists than veterans, because you know that it should be the last extreme. The war you were involved in, and World War I, were times when freedom, democracy and people's lives had to be preserved and saved, and you had to go to war to do that. We appreciate everything that you and all of those who aren't with us today have done, those who died in both those wars and all the other wars that have been fought for good causes.

The other thing I want to say—and it's been mentioned by some here today—is the incredible work that veterans do in our communities. Perhaps it's because you fought so hard to preserve our democracy and our communities that you recognize how important it is that we maintain strong communities. We see veterans involved in every aspect of our communities. From raising money for the poor and for people with disabilities to getting involved in children's events, veterans are there, everywhere.

I have to say, as Mr. Prue said earlier, that when I go to Branch 10, which is the branch in my riding of Toronto–Danforth, and go to the East York Civic Centre—yes, we still have the ceremonies at East York Civic Centre; even though, technically, there is no more East York, there really is still an East York—the services that we have every year on Remembrance Day are very moving in that community.

I find unbelievable and heroic the way some of these veterans are extremely old now. Some of them stand there, and it's always cold, isn't it—the time of the year? It's cold, and sometimes it's rainy. We politicians and other dignitaries are all dressed up warmly, standing on the stage for the ceremonies. But it's the veterans who are out there in not-so-warm clothes, in uniform, who have to stand absolutely still throughout the ceremonies, in the freezing cold at times, getting wet, some of them are in their 80s—I've seen some in their 90s—standing there perfectly still, looking dignified; standing there, still doing their duty. They are proud to be there, and they are proud to come forward on Remembrance Day to be part of the ceremonies that remind us all not only of their sacrifices—because I find there is not much ego involved; you talk very little about what you sacrificed—but their role in preserving our democracy and our freedom. They want to be there, and they are there to show the world that we must care, we must always remember and we must never forget.



This motion before us today will help us to never forget. Thank you for this opportunity.

1050

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It's a real privilege for me to speak on Bill 5 this morning, because Peterborough is the home of Moro Company for the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. If I could dedicate my remarks today to four good friends of mine: General Maxwell Clarke and Sergeant Tony Basciano—General Clarke and Sergeant Basciano both served from 1939 to 1945—and two good friends of mine, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Clarke, the general's son, and Lieutenant Bruce Anderson, who served very capably during the post-war period.

Sergeant Basciano's is an interesting story: In later years, Sergeant Basciano found out that his older brother was on the other side, a member of the Italian army during the Battle of Ortona. For him, he found out later in life that war was indeed hell.

Tom Brokaw, who some of us know as the nightly anchor for NBC news, wrote a book about his father's exploits in the American army during the Second World War called *The Greatest Generation*. When you think of our contribution—in 1939 we had a nation of 11 million people, and by 1945 we had one million men and women in uniform, the greatest contribution on a per capita basis of all the Allied nations. Sometimes we forget about that because, as Canadians, as Ontarians, often we don't talk about it. But it's through the bill put forward by my friend Mr. Parsons that indeed our younger generation will come to understand the history.

I always thought the most inappropriate remarks ever issued by a person in public life were by Lady Astor at the end of the Italian campaign, when she referred to the people who served with the Allies in the Italian campaign—as I said, most inappropriately—as the D-Day Dodgers. A number of Canadian personnel, of course, came up with the song about that to the famous tune of Lilli Marlene.

When you think about that Italian campaign and you read some of the chapters in a book by Ted Barris called *Days of Victory*—I just want to refer to one section of that book. Referring to the battle of Ortona, it says: "Also injured in the campaign en route to Ortona was a young lieutenant from Peterborough, Ontario. Fresh out of the University of Toronto, Allan Park had joined the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, the Hasty P's, and served with the 1st Canadian Division through Sicily and Italy during the summer and fall of 1943. Just a week before Canadian troops entered the outskirts of Ortona, Park engaged a German machine-gun position.

"Allan and one of his snipers got right up under a German machine gun," an eyewitness wrote. "Then, while it was still stuttering above his head, he reached up to grab it. At this point, a German sniper, 600 yards away, killed the sniper who was with Allan and shot Allan through the head."

This was documented by a fellow Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment member, Farley Mowat.

It goes on to say, "The fighting in Ortona was like no other thus far in the war. Beginning on December 20," 1943, "the battle became a virtual 'slugging match' between the Germans' 1st Parachute Division and Maj. Gen. Chris Vokes's 1st Canadian Infantry Division, transforming Ortona 'into a miniature Stalingrad.' The narrow streets proved too vulnerable for Canadian tanks as they were easy prey for German mines or paratrooper raiding parties. The infantry battle lines became incredibly blurred. Sometimes, without realizing it, Canadians and Germans were hunkered down just yards apart; on occasion the front line could be drawn between one row house and the next or between one floor and another."

That certainly highlights very clearly the essence of the Italian campaign: some of the toughest battles during the Second World War. Members of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment distinguished themselves to the nth degree during that battle. Post-war, they went on to serve in NATO in 1951 and 1952. During the ice storm of 1998, reserve unit members from Belleville, Cobourg and Peterborough assisted eastern Ontario when they were sorely needed to look after citizens.

Without a doubt, the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment has one of the greatest histories in Canadian military annals.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** I am proud to enter the debate today in support of my colleague and friend Mr. Parsons. I am a son of Hastings, from Trenton. I went to high school in Belleville and married a girl from Marmora, so that's why I decided it would be fitting for me to join in this debate.

Farley Mowat said it best in the book *The Regiment*, that I want to quote. With the children here today—children; we're talking about these men and women here. We're paying tribute to them today. I'm going to talk about what they went through so that we would have a free country. I'm talking about a chapter called "The River of Blood," the battle for the River Moro, before the Battle of Ortona: "At 2100 hours, in the wet night and in a silence that was doubly ominous, the men of the lead platoon descended the slopes and felt their way across the muddy slough that was the valley floor. Luck was with them, and the absence of an artillery barrage played in their favour for the enemy received no warning of the attack. The platoon forded the stream and began moving painfully towards the black shadows of the northern slope while behind it, the remaining two platoons came forward.

"Suddenly the tension snapped. A single enemy machine gun rippled into hysterical life and at once a dozen flares, some green, some blinding white, lifted and hung above Able company. The signal was instantly answered by the muted and distant thunder of the enemy guns, and by the violent outcry of 20 or more machine guns emplaced on the high banks. A shimmering curtain of tracer swept the valley and within seconds the enemy artillery and mortar shells began to fall in thundering salvos, their flashes outlining the scene with terrifying clarity.



"There was no cover on the valley floor." Commander Kennedy ordered a retreat. The battle waged back and forth.

Later in the battle, "Kennedy, watching from a high knoll on the south bank, glimpsed victory ahead. But there was bad news with the good. A troop of tanks which had descended into the ravine hoping to cross the river near the demolished bridge and so support the infantry in their assault over the crest of the far bank, reported itself hopelessly bogged down. The loss of the tanks was catastrophic, for the enemy had many tanks and would assuredly use them for a counterattack against the naked infantry men if these should manage to scale the northern slopes.

"In every battle there comes a moment when the certainty of the commander is shaken, when his doubts become agonizing, and when the weight of his responsibility becomes intolerable. The commander who thinks of his troops only as ciphers is sometimes spared this moment, but Kennedy was not spared.

"From his observation knoll it appeared to him that Dog company had become too deeply involved on the left flank, and was in danger of being overwhelmed. The failure of the tanks to get across made it seem certain that any local success which might be won by the infantry would be transitory and liable to be turned into costly defeat. Charlie company, on the valley floor, was clearly unable to get forward to assist Dog, and the weight of the enemy defensive fire seemed to be increasing, rather than decreasing.

"Remembering that this was not the major battle but still only a diversion, Kennedy gave in to his doubts and ordered the two companies to withdraw.

"Charlie received the message and obeyed. Dog, with its radio out of order and all three platoons running hog-wild in the centre of a disorganized enemy position, neither heard nor could obey, and Kennedy found himself in a terrible dilemma. His choice was this: to sacrifice Dog in order to preserve the rest of the regiment—or take up the battle again with all of his resources in order to extricate that unfortunate company. He hesitated for no more than five minutes.

"The battle that had been declared over, began anew.

"The carrier platoon, dismounted and acting as infantry, had been sent out to try to cover Dog company's retreat—now it was told to cross the valley and get astride of the road behind Dog company. Baker and Able companies were ordered to take Charlie company's original objectives. Kennedy himself joined Able company and crossed with it.

"Within an hour Able and Baker companies were across, had climbed well up the enemy-held slopes and had dug in with an unshakeable determination not to be driven back into the thundering inferno of the valley."

Over six years, this brave regiment fought these types of battles so that we could stay the country that we are today: free, noble and brave, because of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. There is nothing more we could do than to honour that sacrifice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Parsons, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Parsons:** I want to thank each of the speakers who spoke to this bill. I was very pleased to see young people enter the west gallery, because I can remember the war, not because I was there, but because of conversations with my father and my father-in-law, who both served. My children can remember the war, having had conversations with their grandparents who served. We have an 11-month-old grandson. My father and my father-in-law are gone. For my grandson, I have an obligation to pass on to him. For these young people, they don't remember war, and I hope they never, ever remember war, because of the sacrifices of individuals such as we have in the members' gallery.

1100

We have an obligation to honour the commitment that we will remember. What we will remember will happen only if we take positive, concrete actions to ensure that that happens. The Year of the Veteran is superb. The memorial that will be constructed in front of this Legislature so that all schools visiting will walk past and see the sacrifice that was made so that this place could exist and represent freedom is a superb idea. But I believe all through Ontario we have an opportunity so that each and every day our young people, and us, will be reminded of the sacrifice that was paid—I say by the men and women who served but I'm almost tempted to say boys and girls. When I look at my own children and I think of when I was 18 and 19, they were so very young and so many of them are forever 19 and 20 now.

I appreciate the support given by all members in this Legislature to establish a permanent reminder to our citizens of why we enjoy the freedom we enjoy.

## STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS STRATEGY

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Liberal government enter into an agreement with the city of Toronto to implement the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, and urge the federal government to become an equal partner in this agreement as well.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Churley has moved private member's notice of motion number 3. Pursuant to standing order 96, you have up to 10 minutes.

**Ms. Churley:** I appreciate Mr. Peter Kormos giving me his spot this morning because of the urgency of this resolution.

This past summer, I was appointed chair of the NDP strong neighbourhoods task force. The task force was set up to advocate for the provincial government to become a partner in implementing the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, a plan of action that was authored by the city of Toronto and the United Way of Greater Toronto, with help from both the federal and Ontario governments. It's an amazing report. The report is "to stop neigh-



bourhood decline and improve the prospects and safety of both residents and the city as a whole.”

I understand that there have been some very positive things said about the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy by the provincial Liberal government in the past months. That gives me and those who are here today from the local communities and front-line agencies optimism that this resolution will be adopted. The urgency is because December 2005 is the deadline to have an intergovernmental agreement in place to implement the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy. It's important that we here today debate this and urge the provincial government to move forward.

Today's debate and the vote come on the heels of a motion Toronto's policy and finance committee passed last week in support of this strategy. I believe it's before council for a vote. It hasn't happened yet but I'm sure that it will pass. One part of this motion expressly calls on provincial and federal government support in implementing this blueprint for neighbourhood renewal. This strategy cannot be fully enacted without these two other levels of government providing resources and reforming government policy. By passing the resolution I'm proposing, the provincial government would be answering the city's call with a clear commitment to make this strategy a part of its new deal for Toronto. By entering into this agreement, the province is also articulating that it is serious about playing a critical role and addressing the root causes for problems that undermine the city's long-term prosperity and safety. If they go unaddressed, trends like the ever-growing gap between rich and poor and the rising levels of violent crime involving youth will continue.

The Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy is a plan to revitalize neighbourhoods impacted by poverty. Research shows that over the past years, more and more neighbourhoods in Toronto are facing increasing challenges, that there's a scarcity of assistance available to help those communities improve local conditions and that if urgent action is not taken to prevent and stop neighbourhood decline, all of Toronto and eventually this province will be affected. We're starting to see some of this now.

Despite the economic growth Ontario experienced during the 1990s, the prevalence of poverty in Toronto has increased in the past decade. In 2001, there were 120 areas of concentrated poverty; in 1980, that number was only 30. The rise in poverty is the product of different converging factors, ranging from the loss of manufacturing jobs to foreign-trained professionals not being able to gain work in their chosen professions once they arrive here, even though they are promised they can get jobs in those professions when they come. We meet them day after day as security guards and taxi drivers, doing whatever, because they can't work in their own profession. So they're living in poverty.

Another instrumental factor is that the cycle of poverty has become harder and harder to break because the infrastructure of programs that we refer to as the social

safety net has become thinner and thinner. In the past decade, the provincial and federal governments have cut social services that help people and communities regain their footing and then downloaded those programs to cash-strapped municipalities that have seen their infrastructure funding cut at the same time. It's a downward spiral that we have to fix, and this report gives us a blueprint as to how to do this, working with the communities. More and more people have been falling through the ever-growing cracks in the net rather than being caught by it, which is what it's supposed to do.

The geography of poverty has also changed, giving rise to the inner suburb. As a result of individuals and families with low incomes moving to where housing costs are—or at least used to be—somewhat lower, many of these new areas where poverty is concentrated are found in the former municipalities of Scarborough, North York, York, Etobicoke and East York. Living in these inner suburbs puts people at an even greater disadvantage, because social services, employment centres, youth drop-in programs and community centres, which we have the luxury of having here in downtown Toronto—we fought hard for them for years, and had them—do not exist. They are historically not concentrated in those areas. Having few local services and supports makes it even harder to change those prospects.

I want to say, and underscore, that it is a mistake to stigmatize the communities identified in this strategy. There's a natural tendency to think that because a community needs help, it is not capable. This is an incorrect assumption. I know that some of the communities that were identified in this report felt stigmatized, and some people in those communities told me that. I want to say here today that all of these communities are incredible, with incredible people who are working hard to help themselves in these communities. When you go to these areas, as I have with my leader, Howard Hampton, to consult with people, particularly youth, you will witness incredible community grassroots work that is very impressive. I want to draw on just one example of such grassroots efforts.

In the gallery today we have members from the Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services agency. This outfit is a result of local residents mobilizing to provide settlement services to the diverse newcomer population that settles in the east end of Toronto. BCS has been up and running now for close to five years and it is completely volunteer-driven. It does great work in response to the community but has very limited resources. The demand far exceeds its capacity.

That is what this strategy is all about: helping communities help themselves. What has been missing in the equation for so long is government commitment to these neighbourhoods, because local residents and grassroots organizations need support so that they can expand the work and difference they are making.

1110

When consulting with some youth from the black community, the Tamil community, we heard time and



time again from youth who are working with other youth, from high school students, from their parents who are struggling, some with two to three jobs, their kids in school—the Safe Schools Act, which is not working for them any more—they have nowhere to go and nothing to do most of the time. What this report is all about, and why it's so strong and why we have to act to make sure that the provincial government does its bit in this multi-faceted response is to put those resources in place, and it calls for working directly with the communities.

Mr. Prue and I were in Crescent Town recently to talk about this report and to say to that community that it is a fabulous community, it is a great community. I have been to so many community events in that area over the past little while. It's a very active community that's working very hard to help itself. And through no fault of their own, they do not have the resources, the community centres and the other community resources, to help them, and this is what this report is all about. It's saying to all levels of government that we have a responsibility to help these tremendous communities, who are doing so much to help themselves, but they do not have the social programs and the resources to do what they know needs to be done to help their own communities. I hope I will get support from all members in the House for this resolution.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I will be joining in this debate along with some other members from the Liberal Party, the government, today. First of all, I want to commend the member from Toronto–Danforth for bringing forward this resolution, which basically calls for the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy to be implemented and to try to get assistance from the provincial and federal governments.

I want to say that my background, and the background of the member from Toronto–Danforth and other members who are here today—Mr. Prue is here and he represents the riding of Beaches–East York, a former councillor; we served on council together—we all went through the recent amalgamation of the city of Toronto back in the late 1990s. What we really saw and were frustrated with was a lack of communication with the provincial government.

I think that's changed a lot nowadays. We've seen the gas tax, where a portion is going to municipalities. We've seen a proposed new City of Toronto Act. We've seen the Attorney General and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services try to deal with some of the crime issues in the city of Toronto. These are all positive steps.

There was tremendous frustration, as a former councillor in the city of Toronto, because of the fact that the province just didn't listen to us. I remember at one point when it reached its darkest point. The mayor of Toronto at that time was calling the Premier a liar and Premier Harris was responding with all sorts of other name-calling, and at some point the name-calling brought in other members from the provincial government. I think one of them was Chris Stockwell. I don't know who was

the monkey grinder; one was called a monkey grinder and one was called a monkey, and it was just bad.

We don't see that nowadays. We see the mayor of Toronto, David Miller, working very closely with the Premier, and they have a good working relationship. They respect each other. There are challenges, of course, at the city level, at the provincial level and at the federal level. I think that we're moving in the right direction. Can we go faster? Perhaps. Have we helped the situation? Definitely. Was the situation worse before this present government was here? Absolutely. We are on the right road. We are improving, and I think we need to focus now on trying to do some things for Toronto. The report that came from the policy and finance committee speaks clearly of adopting a strong neighbourhood strategy to bring investment into various neighbourhoods. Interestingly enough, a number of those neighbourhoods are in Scarborough and, in fact, within my own riding, so of course I want to see something like this happen. I think there's a need for this, and I would support something like this that would let Toronto, Scarborough and Scarborough Southwest see better delivery of services and improvements in various other things that exist right now regarding infrastructure gaps and other problems.

I know there are members present here who are not from Toronto, and I'm just going to say something about that because they always say, "Why do you have to talk about Toronto?" There are only 20-odd members here from Toronto, and the rest are from outside of Toronto. This transcends all three parties, and it's an issue that I think Toronto members from all three parties have to deal with. I don't think there are any Toronto members from the Conservative Party, but I know that the NDP and the Liberals have members who represent various ridings in the city of Toronto.

Toronto absorbs various problems from other parts of the province. For homeless people from Timmins, or someone who wants to leave Timmins or North Bay or Windsor or the Ottawa area, where are they going? They come to Toronto. When I had the opportunity to be a city councillor and I would talk to some of these so-called street kids or squeegee kids, what I found out is a lot of them were not from Toronto. They came from other cities; they came into Toronto. Toronto had to provide the social services, Toronto had to provide the bedding, Toronto had to provide the food and Toronto had to provide the support system to take care of these kids, these young people who would come down from other parts of the province. So it's not just a Toronto issue; it's beyond that.

What we've seen in the past few years with the amalgamation and the fact that the previous provincial government really hammered Toronto heavily is that we at Toronto city council had to deal with some tremendous challenges in trying to get the city up and running. I know the member from Beaches–East York knows about that, and myself as well. It was very difficult to bring about a functioning city.



I could go on for much longer, but I know there are others from our side who want to speak to this issue and give a different perspective on it. But I just want to say that I support it. I think that the federal government needs to chip in even more than they have, and I think that the city of Toronto as well needs to be serious about putting the financial resources into this. The provincial government has given money to the city, has given the gas tax, transit funding and has given help to the city of Toronto, and all sorts of other things which were badly lacking when Mike Harris and Ernie Eves tried to run this government and this province.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** I am pleased to join the debate on the motion brought forward today by the member for Toronto-Danforth: "That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Liberal government enter into an agreement with the city of Toronto to implement the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, and urge the federal government to become an equal partner in this agreement as well."

I didn't realize the deadline of 2005 that Ms. Churley had mentioned, and wants it to be part of a new deal with Toronto. There has been mention that over the past summer, and just recently, we've all been witness to the tragic consequences of violence and youth violence on the streets of Toronto. I don't believe that any member of this Legislature believes that the status quo is acceptable. We all need to do more.

It is quite commendable that the United Way has participated in this task force, which helps identify those parts of Toronto where social services are most out of step with the local needs. I'm pleased to see that the recommendations from the task force recognize the importance of people in those communities who play an important role in implementing the solutions.

As I was learning more about this effort to identify at-risk communities, I was struck by how our urban and rural communities are so different in so many ways but so similar in many ways. I represent a predominantly rural part of the riding but have been in Toronto on and off for the past 20 years of my life, working in and out of the city, as well as in the rural communities in my riding.

1120

It's true that communities across my riding and across Ontario have been struggling for years to obtain access to many of the services that some people in the larger cities take for granted. While we're debating the need for targeting resources in Toronto, we should not forget the areas outside Toronto that are facing access problems. I have a lot of groups in my riding that do a wonderful job of working with youth in the riding and in engaging more community groups in this long-term fight to make our communities stronger and safer.

I want to acknowledge Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton. I know that Big Brothers and Big Sisters were here last week. I was incredibly surprised at how many members in this Legislature have been involved with Big Brothers and Big Sisters over

their years of strengthening their communities and helping young people.

Children's social services of Victoria county; the city of Kawartha Lakes parks, recreation and culture division; the city of Kawartha Lakes Boys and Girls Club has done a tremendous job and are expanding; the Climax Climbing Club—clubs I didn't know existed until I really got into being an elected member here. Even the curling clubs in our area do a great job of adults bridging to youth and getting them involved in activities. The John Howard Society of Victoria, Haliburton, Simcoe and Muskoka; the karate groups of Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton; the 4-H associations, which are celebrating their 90th anniversary this year, but have been strong community members in educating our young into strong leadership and leaders in our communities; Kinark Child and Family Services hosted their first water festival this year. They're all part of engaging youth and teaching them skills to become stronger and more responsible leaders.

I could go on with many. With the veterans here, I wanted to mention that we have several associations of cadets in my riding, the Girl Guides of Canada, junior firefighters, many hockey teams, Scouts Canada, Brownies, Sparks etc. which are all engaged in the communities. I think they're examples of how communities need to become engaged.

It is admirable that Ms. Churley has brought this motion forward to stress that all levels of government have to partner with communities, if that is our goal.

I was involved a little bit with Operation Springboard here in Toronto. They have 15 locations in Ontario, and they've touched thousands of lives of youth and adults. It's a social service agency that's strongly rooted in the community with a multifaceted approach and a close relationship with the criminal justice and social service systems, given their well-earned reputation of legitimacy and hard-fought history, working toward safer communities for over 30 years. I think there is 5% recidivism rate with Operation Springboard.

There are a lot of programs out there that we can certainly take guidance from. There was a program called Choices...Straight Up, an approach to crime prevention, a very innovative program that spoke to youth in the communities. I know Operation Springboard mostly from their work in Toronto, but they have worked with over 700 at-risk children and young adults. In addition to the efforts to curb crime, Operation Springboard hosts community development and volunteer programs that assist youth to find employment and maintain the positions that they earn, which undoubtedly contributes to a sense of safety and well-being among all members of the communities.

I know that Regent Park is written up a lot in the newspapers, and rightly so. It is without doubt one of Toronto's most diverse and resilient neighbourhoods, which thrives on a strong sense of community spirit. It was built over 50 years ago. It is one of the oldest publicly funded housing communities in Canada, with



12,000 people living in Regent Park and surrounding area. They have rent-geared-to-income units, home to 7,500 people, 50% of whom are children under 18 years of age.

The community is rapidly deteriorating. Buildings need major repairs and upgrades. There has been a massive revitalization effort from the residents' association. They need volunteers, and members of the community are coming out to help them rebuild Regent Park. They are shining examples.

To outreach to different cultural communities in Toronto is wonderful, but the solution to the problem of youth violence in our communities is not simply the pouring of money into programs that address the inequitable distribution of social services and infrastructure. The solution also includes the need to send a clear message to those communities that these crimes are serious and that there are real consequences in store for anyone who has a gun in the commission of a crime, and that's not something that's happening right now. Building more recreation centres is a good thing, but a far more effective thing to do would be for all levels of government to send a clear and strong message that our society will not tolerate this type of behaviour.

We've heard the government tout the grand plan for 1,000 more police officers on the streets, but we still have not seen those 1,000 police officers on the streets. We have to create a safe environment so that municipalities can work with levels of government so that the communities feel safe.

It's important to support the principle of targeting resources to areas in need. The Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy is part of that, but we also have to create safe neighbourhoods, and with individuals who commit crimes, especially youth crimes, show that we need strong penalties but that we also need to work with community groups to show the damage young offenders do to their communities and how it affects people at all levels.

I applaud the member from Toronto-Danforth for bringing this forward, hearing its sensitivities, and we should all work together to help the communities be stronger.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I am pleased to rise and speak in favour of the motion put forward by my colleague from Toronto-Danforth. The United Way reported, in its report about the new face of poverty in Toronto, that in 1980 there were 30 areas of the then municipality of Metropolitan Toronto that could be described as being poor areas, that met the definition of poverty. In the year 2001, sadly, unfortunately and through a great many factors, that number of 30 has jumped to 120. So there are four times as many poor areas in the new city of Toronto than there were in Metropolitan Toronto just 20 years before.

People can ask why this has happened. I guess there are a lot of social, economic and political reasons why it did. First and foremost, housing downtown got very expensive. It's an expensive place to live now, and where

the downtown core was once sort of the heart and where poverty could be defined, that is no longer necessarily the case. Poverty is now seen in what are called the inner suburbs, those places of East York, York, Scarborough, North York and Etobicoke. That is the new face of poverty. You don't see it downtown any more, although you will still see, of course, poor people there and the homeless tend to congregate in the downtown core. But the real face of poverty in Toronto today is very different than it was back in 1980.

There is a reason for that. It is because of the expense of living downtown. The cheaper apartments and places where people could live were in the inner suburbs. These are apartments that were built in the 1950s, through the early 1970s and up into the late 1970s. Those apartments became available. Although they're older, they tend to be cheaper and people move from the downtown core to the cheapest units. They didn't go all the way out to Mississauga, Durham, York or Halton, because that's too far for many people to commute to work who don't own cars, but also because those new communities have new and expensive housing. It's very difficult and there are not many apartments being built out in those suburbs. So people moved to the inner suburbs and the inner suburbs were completely at a lack to provide for them. Whereas all the social services and safety nets were downtown in the past, they're not where the people are now living.

1130

The TD Bank Financial Group called this "persistent, deep pools of poverty." How did these deep pools develop? People moved to where the cheaper housing was, and there certainly are no resources. But I think politicians at all levels have to be part of the blame here too, because policies that were implemented in the last 20 or 25 years have not helped the cause of those who are poor. There have been and continue to be cutbacks and freezing of welfare rates. There have been and continue to be a clawback of monies from the poorest of poor children, whose families have to give back money that was intended to alleviate poverty. This province claws that money back and continues to do so. There has been a dearth of social housing built in this city and in this province for many years. In fact, I think last year, the last year for which there are statistics, there were only 26 units of social housing built in the entire province, and all of those were in aboriginal communities, not one being in the city of Toronto.

There has been, of course, the downloading of public and social housing units from the province to the municipalities, and in this case to the city of Toronto, which quite frankly does not have the resources to maintain them adequately. There have been and continue to be problems with the school boards in all municipalities, but with Toronto being singularly unable for a number of years to offer up their properties for after-school activities. This is changing somewhat and I am thankful for that small change. But for many years there was nowhere for the kids to go because the schools, quite literally in the inner suburbs, were the only community



centres that might have been available and they were closed due to lack of funding.

Last but not least, in a city as expensive as Toronto, the minimum wage, which was frozen for so many years, remains so inadequate, so preposterous, so unbelievable. I question any member of this House to stand in his or her place and say—a person who earns the minimum wage, works 40 hours a week, would take home approximately \$300 a week before taxes; that is about \$15,000 a year. Where an average two-bedroom apartment is more than \$1,000 a month, that literally takes all the money that a person who works full time would earn, and if they have a family to provide for, quite frankly, I don't know how they do it. I don't know and I don't think anybody in this chamber would know how they do it either.

These are the problems that are faced.

The United Way listed nine communities that are very much at risk. Those nine communities they listed are Victoria Village, Dorset Park, Eglinton East, Scarborough Village, Black Creek, Westminster-Branson, Crescent Town, Steeles and Kennedy Park. Since the writing of this report, four additional communities have been added. I want to talk about just one of those communities: the community of Crescent Town, which is in the riding of Beaches-East York, a community, a neighbourhood that I have had the privilege of representing now for 17 years in one capacity or another.

Crescent Town was built in the early 1970s. It was one of the last large rental unit projects built in the 1970s, and it was built on a condition by the then borough of East York that Crescent Town had to be self-contained. You see, East York didn't have any money in those days to put in a community centre for 10,000 people. They didn't have the money to provide all the facilities and amenities that 10,000 people coming in to the borough at that time would need. So they made the developer of Crescent Town build their own facilities. Crescent Town to this day has its own club. It has its own handball courts and swimming pool. It has a drop-in centre that is used by the kids. But the residents of Crescent Town pay for that themselves. Not one cent has ever been given by the borough of East York or now by the city of Toronto, or by the province, to Crescent Town to upgrade or keep its club going.

I have to tell you that after 35 years it is very difficult to offer that facility in the way that it should, and the kids are looking for something better, I hope, than a 35-year-old facility badly in need of some repairs.

That neighbourhood has been a strong neighbourhood. Over the course of all of those 35 years, there have been many changes. The community, when it was first built, was just like most places in Toronto predominantly British, north European stock. Those are the people who lived there. Today it is a very vibrant multicultural community, and a very large number of people from a South Asian background live there. It is in fact, I would suggest, an immigrant community.

The school that was once overcrowded has been rebuilt, and to the credit of the people of Crescent Town

and the students of Crescent Town, that school, which was always kind of low on the scores, this year, for the first time that I ever remember, was actually above the Toronto average. So, many kudos to the educators and to the parents and kids in Crescent Town, who have shown that they can do it.

But they need our help; they need our help I think desperately. There are some youth problems beginning to manifest. There are many landlord issues, of course, with the state of buildings that are 35 years old and could have been, and should have been, kept in better repair.

One of the members speaking earlier was surprised at why this is coming forward and why there is such urgency. I think I should read out why, because the United Way task force set 10 conditions. Eight of those conditions that have to be met for us to alleviate poverty in Toronto—and to start working on these nine, and now 13 or 14, communities—are provincial in nature, involve the province.

Recommendation 10—I want to read it out in its entirety—says why this is important:

“The task force recommends that the three orders of government commit to the following timeline for implementation of the Toronto neighbourhoods strategy:

“By December 2005, governments”—and that means us—“will have:

“(a) established the intergovernmental table;

“(b) confirmed the neighbourhoods for initial investment;

“(c) identified and committed resources to implement the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy;

“(d) established the strong neighbourhood investment board;

“(e) established the strong neighbourhoods unit; and

(f) established the local neighbourhood investment partnerships.”

Of course, most of that hasn't been done. The city of Toronto has done most of that, but the province has yet to do it. Hence the urgency of this resolution, because by December 2006 and every year thereafter, governments will issue annual reports under the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy. I believe the Premier has committed himself to do that. We have got to get our act together. We have to get moving on this.

We have an obligation to our poor communities, we have an obligation to our city and our province, I believe, to make sure that those communities in most need get the resources they need. In so doing, we'll build a stronger city and a stronger province. We will do much to alleviate poverty and much to alleviate violence if we proceed that way.

I am going to stop now because I want to leave some additional time for my friend from Toronto—Danforth, but I hope that this passes unanimously.

1140

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** I first of all would like to recognize the member from Toronto—Danforth in bringing forward this resolution, “That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Liberal govern-



ment enter into an agreement with the city of Toronto to implement the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, and urge the federal government to become an equal partner in this agreement as well."

I'd like as well to commend my colleague the MPP from Scarborough Southwest on opening the government's comments on this.

We in the government certainly support strong neighbourhoods and the report of this particular task force, which I understand was filed on June 30 this year. In particular, perhaps one of the highlights of the directed energies of this report is that 13 neighbourhoods have been singled out for particular recognition, and hopefully improvement over time. One of those neighbourhoods—number two on the list, I believe—is Jamestown, which of course is a neighbourhood within my own riding of Etobicoke North and certainly has had its share of needs and risks. One of the things about this particular report, and perhaps this overall strategy—first of all, there's a great deal to say and not especially a great deal of time in which to say it. As T.S. Eliot said, "Time present" allows "but a little consciousness."

I'm reminded of the motto of the French Revolution, which was, "Liberté, égalité, fraternité," which means, of course, as you'll appreciate, Speaker, liberty, equality and fraternity. That, I think, is perhaps the ultimate spirit of this particular report: liberty to reach one's full potential, to not have constraints of any kind, be they physical, emotional or economic; equality, again moving toward the phrase of Trudeau, "the just society"; and fraternity, or co-operative action between all levels of government—something that is particularly called for within this report. Of course, we realize that it's only by co-operation at multiple levels of government that we can really further all of our mutual interests. Certainly, we in the government support strong neighbourhoods, neighbourhood-building such as creating investment boards to better integrate service deliveries and investing in priority neighbourhoods including Jamestown.

Now, with respect, I would like to just say to the MPP from Beaches–East York, whose comments are always very thoughtful—I would nevertheless submit that his negative criticisms of the current government actually remind me of some of the American generals who always seem to be fighting the last war. As you'll recall, Speaker, it was in fact well documented that the Harris-Eves government led to multiple cutbacks and down-loadings, the consequences of which we are now dealing with. In what respect? Persistently low incomes, widening income gaps, of which multicultural communities are unfortunately particular representatives of, and the recent influx of guns and gangs—as you'll recall, Speaker, I invited to respect and to honour the father of a young man who was shot in my riding, one of three funerals that I actually had to attend, unfortunately, in my duties as the MPP for Etobicoke North—and just the generalized unequal distribution of services and facilities.

Now, there is so much to say, whether we're dealing with the \$23-billion gap, which unfortunately resonates

too much in the city of Toronto, particularly with regard to new Canadians; the issues with regard the guns and gangs, which I'm pleased to see that our government is now moving forward on with, for example, the provision of extra crown prosecutors as well as specific task forces that are devoted to this issue. In general, we need to, for example, mobilize our federal colleagues. The \$23-billion gap is something that is also well-known and is also perhaps publicizing itself throughout the press through Ontario. Ultimately, it's a gap that Ontario needs to have addressed, because a stronger Ontario, of course, leads to a stronger federation.

Speaker, with your permission, I would like to yield the floor to the colleague, the MPP from Willowdale.

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** Speaker, I've been involved—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Excuse me. The member for Oak Ridges.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I'm pleased to participate in debate on this motion brought forward by the member from Toronto–Danforth, and I commend her for doing so. I want to commit my support for this resolution. There's no doubt in my mind that all of us here in the Legislature share the objective of this resolution, and certainly we would, I believe, all be able to sign to the objective of the strategy that's been proposed. Strong neighbourhoods are the foundation of our society. Strong neighbourhoods are based on strong families, and anything we can do through public policy we should do as members of this Legislature.

Members have referred in debate to the important role the federal government will also have in ensuring that this strategy is appropriately funded. There isn't much we can do without the financial resources to implement the objectives as set out in this strategy.

I don't pretend to speak for all my colleagues. As this is a private member's bill, they will vote as their conscience would guide them, but I will certainly speak for myself and on behalf of my constituents. Although I don't represent a Toronto-centric riding, I do represent the riding of Oak Ridges, which is all of Richmond Hill, Whitchurch–Stouffville and the northern part of Markham.

I'm one who believes very strongly that the quality of life throughout the greater Toronto area, indeed Ontario, largely depends on the quality of life within the city of Toronto. In many ways, the city of Toronto is an indicator of the economic health and social strength of the rest of the province, so it must indeed be a focus for our government.

I would say this: I would encourage the city of Toronto, the province and indeed the federal government to give some serious consideration to an issue when I had the privilege of serving in the last government as Minister of Tourism and Recreation. In that capacity, I had responsibility for a number of portfolios that related to recreational activity, amateur sports and so on. One of the files I had asked our civil service to investigate was how we can utilize existing structures, facilities and infra-



structure within our communities that are perhaps being underutilized. A proposal that I had put forward we had designated as our open doors policy, and I refer to our schools within every community.

There isn't a community within this city, within the GTA or the province that doesn't have schools, be they public or secondary schools. These are facilities that have been paid for by the citizens of the city and the province. They should be the centre, in many ways, of our communities. The vision I had at the time was that every school be considered a community centre. There are gymnasiums, there are all kinds of facilities that can be utilized by investing in a program that opens the doors of these facilities. Think about it: the number of our young people who are on the street, having to hang out in malls, walking by a school that has a gymnasium and all kinds of facilities because the doors are locked. They are locked in the afternoon and on the weekends.

I would call on the government to seriously consider throwing open those doors. Let's make those schools the centres of our communities. Invest the dollars into those facilities so that in fact they can be utilized by the members of our community. I know the government is moving in that direction, and I have complimented the Honourable Jim Bradley for taking up on that initiative that we had begun. We have had those discussions.

*Laughter.*

**Mr. Klees:** Honourable members are laughing. Speak to the minister. We have had that discussion. He knows full well that was an initiative that was very close to my heart in terms of bringing it forward, and I commend the government for doing that. I know that we in our party will stand behind programs that will, in a substantive way, improve the quality of life for people in the city of Toronto, especially immigrants.

1150

In closing, I want to say this: If there's anything we can do to enhance the quality of life, particularly for the immigrant community in the city of Toronto, it's to give meaningful focus to ensuring that foreign-trained professionals and people who come to this country with trade skills have the opportunity to put those into practice and to earn a living for themselves and their families.

**Mr. Zimmer:** I'm pleased to rise in support of this motion. It's time for action here in the city of Toronto on these issues.

Let me just lay out a little bit of the background here. A couple of years ago—I think it was about three years ago that I got involved in this—there was the Toronto City Summit Alliance report, which very early on called for action on our neighbourhoods that require extra attention. That group produced a report entitled Enough Talk. That was a significant choice of title—Enough Talk—the implication being that we've talked about this for years and years, and we have to move forward. That Toronto City Summit Alliance set up a strong neighbourhoods task force to come up with some recommendations, recognizing that we've talked about this enough and it's time to move forward. Twenty-two community

leaders, the United Way, the corporate world, the community world and political leaders from the province released a report wherein they identified 13 neighbourhoods in Toronto that required, in their opinion, some real help to get themselves moving, to address the problems they face in terms of poverty, community services, crime, problems with children, education and all those problems. I read that report over carefully.

I must say that I had some sense even before the report was released about the issues the city was facing. For a number of the years, I was chairman of the Toronto Community Housing Corp. That's the social housing provider here in the city of Toronto, with 164,000 tenants spread over 61,000 or 62,000 units. We saw first-hand at that board the problems these 13 neighbours were facing in Toronto. We virtually had residents and apartment building tenants living in all of those neighbourhoods. Our board, our staff, saw first-hand what was going on. If you had been able to sit with me at some of those board meetings, your heart would cry out for redress of some of the issues we had to deal with.

I was very privileged to serve on that board with Mr. Nick Volk, who's here in the members' gallery. Nick, would you stand up? Nick Volk was a very distinguished member of the Toronto Community Housing Corp. He served Habitat for Humanity here in Toronto and for the past 30 years—that's more than the longest-serving member of this Legislature has sat in this body—Nick Volk has been an advocate for redress in Toronto neighbourhoods. I congratulate him for this. Nick Volk took me under his wing at the Toronto Community Housing Corp. and helped me to understand the problems that were facing our neighbourhoods.

What does the report entail? The report has three elements, three key components to its strategy: We need an intergovernmental agreement to ensure coordinated investment; we need commitment and agreement on target resources and how to allocate those resources; and we need to have a mechanism whereby if the scope of the existing programs and services is insufficient for the neighbourhood, there's some way to top up those services.

I was happy to be at the unveiling of the task force report on June 30. Mayor Miller was there. He obviously strongly endorsed it. I was there and I endorsed it on behalf of the Ontario government and particularly on behalf of the Toronto caucus. There was federal representation there that endorsed it.

We've had enough talk on this. We have to move forward.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Toronto—Danforth.

**Ms. Churley:** I appreciate the comments made from all parties this morning. As you may have noticed, I have gone out of my way to not be partisan and play the blame game today. It can be very tempting to do so. But I agree with Mr. Zimmer on this, that Enough Talk should be the theme of the day. That's why we're here this morning,



because there has been a whole lot of talk about this issue.

Some members brought up gun violence this morning and law-and-order issues. I want to say that I was deliberately decoupling that issue. I know it's connected, but I decoupled it for a reason. There has been a lot of focus on the law and order side, as there should be, because we know that poverty and a lack of resources play a huge part in the gun violence we're seeing. But I decoupled it because it is so important to recognize that those communities we're talking about are about a lot more than gun violence and troubled youth. What this is all about today is also to prevent these problems from happening with youth down the road. So I deliberately, strategically, wanted to talk today about the resources that are needed, that are spelled out in this report. It tells us exactly what we have to do to help those communities help themselves.

These communities are proud communities, as they should be. My leader and I, as I said earlier, visited some of those communities, and I know other members here have done so as well. I urge everybody to go and see these communities for what they are, because they are about a lot more than what we read in the headlines in newspapers every day. They are made up of people like you and me. They are made up of brave mothers and fathers, single mothers, kids who are going through school and getting jobs, some working two or three jobs to support their families or go to university. There are incredible people living in these amazing communities, and I wanted to highlight and congratulate those communities today for all the good things about them. That's what we're here for today, to celebrate these wonderful communities and say that it's the communities, the leaders in those communities and the struggling parents who are doing the work all on their own to help themselves. We in this place need to draw upon this report and help those communities.

We have with us members from the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, who are meeting with us here today, fittingly enough; the Ralph Thornton Centre; the United Way; and the Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services agency over here. I referred to them earlier and the incredible work they are doing, without any government support whatsoever. There are people like that in our communities all over the city and all over the province, struggling. They work full-time and they spend their evenings and weekends in their communities, without the resources they need to help their communities. I think we also have representatives from the South Asian Legal Clinic, and I'm sure there are more—well, they were here. I guess they had to get back to their meeting.

I am here today, and we are all here today, to applaud their work. Without them, as the United Way says, there would be no way. They are the ones who are making the difference and they're struggling to do it on their own. We need to thank the United Way, the city of Toronto, the Toronto City Summit Alliance and all of those who

worked hard to do the research and bring forward this report.

This debate today is not going to draw headlines. It's not about gang violence and shootings; it's about our communities, it's about us, it's about who we are collectively. The reason why this is here today is because we have a deadline—the province, the feds, the city—to follow through on these recommendations by December, and we're here today to make sure that happens.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for private members' public business has now expired.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT  
AMENDMENT ACT (HASTINGS  
AND PRINCE EDWARD REGIMENT  
MEMORIAL HIGHWAY), 2005

LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR L'AMENAGEMENT DES VOIES  
PUBLIQUES ET DES TRANSPORTS EN  
COMMUN (ROUTE COMMEMORATIVE  
HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD  
REGIMENT)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** We shall deal first with ballot item number 3, standing in the name of Mr. Parsons.

Mr. Parsons has moved second reading of Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act to name a portion of Highway 62 and Highway 33 the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will call in the members after dealing with the next ballot item.

STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS  
STRATEGY

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** We will now deal with ballot item number 4, private member's notice of motion number 3, in the name of Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley has moved that, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Liberal government enter into an agreement with the city of Toronto to implement the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, and urge the federal government to become an equal partner in this agreement as well.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. I remind the members this is a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1201 to 1206.*



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT  
AMENDMENT ACT (HASTINGS  
AND PRINCE EDWARD REGIMENT  
MEMORIAL HIGHWAY), 2005  
LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DES VOIES  
PUBLIQUES ET DES TRANSPORTS EN  
COMMUN (ROUTE COMMEMORATIVE  
HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD  
REGIMENT)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Parsons has moved second reading of Bill 5. All those in favour, please rise.

**Ayes**

Baird, John R.  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Caplan, David  
Churley, Marilyn  
Craitor, Kim  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Hampton, Howard  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Horwath, Andrea  
Hoy, Pat  
Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
Kwinter, Monte

Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marchese, Rosario  
Marsales, Judy  
Martel, Shelley  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Miller, Norm  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Parsons, Ernie

Patten, Richard  
Prue, Michael  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Tory, John  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Wilkinson, John  
Yakubuski, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 47; the nays are 0.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Mr Parsons has asked that the bill be ordered to the standing committee on regulations and private bills. Agreed? Agreed.

Now we'll open the doors for 30 seconds.

STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS  
STRATEGY

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Churley has moved private member's notice of motion 3. All those in favour will please stand.

**Ayes**

Baird, John R.  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Caplan, David  
Churley, Marilyn  
Craitor, Kim  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Hampton, Howard  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Horwath, Andrea  
Hoy, Pat  
Klees, Frank

Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marchese, Rosario  
Marsales, Judy  
Martel, Shelley  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Miller, Norm  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David

Patten, Richard  
Prue, Michael  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Tory, John  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Wilkinson, John  
Yakubuski, John

Kormos, Peter  
Kwinter, Monte

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Parsons, Ernie

Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 47; the nays are 0.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

All matters relating to private members' public business having now been dealt with, I do leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30 of the clock.

*The House recessed from 1211 to 1330.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** Last weekend I was very pleased to attend the Celebration of the Arts, sponsored by the York Region Newspaper Group. The evening honours recipients of the organization's art bursaries, which are given out to York region's most promising young artists. The celebration is in its fifth year, and it is a gala evening, featuring performances by some of the 2005 bursary winners and other years' fine artists. As well, the audience was entertained by the outstanding Huron Heights After-Hours jazz band.

In five years, they have awarded 68 bursaries, and thanks to the ever-growing list of sponsors, in 2005 they awarded the most bursaries ever: 20. This year's bursary winners are: Amanda Bell, Hillary Coote, Christopher Dallo, Stephan Ermel, Elisa Gargarella, Alessia Iorio, Caley Kaiman, Haley Kirk, Georgia Leung, Kyle Merrithew, Amber Minchella, Gerrie O'Brien, Brandon Rad, Radhika Ray, Rajini Retnasothie, Deanna Roffey, Jackie Saltzman, Hyunjoo Eugene Shon, Samantha Taylor and Mathew Teofilo.

I know I join with all my York region colleagues in honouring these great artists. Thanks as well to the York Region Newspaper Group and all the other sponsors and volunteers.

BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL

**Mr. Tim Peterson (Mississauga South):** It's a great pleasure to rise today, especially in the presence of our mayor, Hazel McCallion, and the city manager, Janice Baker. They will be introduced more formally later, I'm sure. It's my pleasure to rise to talk about the 2005 Southside Shuffle.

Once again, this blues and jazz festival was held in Port Credit, in Mississauga South, on the weekend following Labour Day. This year was more successful than ever. In three days, attendance exceeded 100,000 people, and it was so important that even John Tory attended.

On the Wednesday prior, we held the blues gala evening called New Orleans 2005. Over 600 people attended and we raised over \$40,000 for local charities and not-for-profit organizations, including Youth Net Peel, Lake-

shore Corridor Community Team, Interim Place, the Compass food bank, Foodpath and New Orleans relief.

Mr. Chuck Jackson, the founder of Southside Shuffle, his wonderful team, as well as Mississauga South Charity deserve our thanks and congratulations for another successful festival and their great contribution that was made to the community of Mississauga South.

### GAMMA FOUNDRIES

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** On December 9, 2004, I brought to the attention of the Legislature, and specifically to the Minister of the Environment, a long-standing issue involving Gamma Foundries in Richmond Hill.

I rise today to report to this House that regrettably little has changed for the residents who continue to be subjected to the offensive odours and particulate fallout from the Gamma foundry operations.

In fact, despite a provincial officer order issued on December 21, 2004, which ordered Gamma to prepare an action plan that will address odour emissions from the plant, the company's response to that order is a blatant attempt to delay implementation of any meaningful mitigation measures which were identified in the engineering report in response to the Ministry of the Environment order.

I am therefore calling today on the Ministry of the Environment to issue a new provincial officer order which will explicitly require the immediate implementation of the specific engineering controls and control technology that was identified in the EarthTech report, and to prescribe specific timelines for compliance.

Nothing short of an immediate new order will be acceptable. The community that is being subjected to these odours and these pollutants should no longer have to put up with the treatment they're receiving from this company.

### UNION VILLA

**Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham):** Today I rise to share with members of this chamber some very good news for seniors living in my riding of Markham. Yesterday I had the good fortune of participating in the official grand opening ceremony of a new Union Villa, a long-term-care facility. Union Villa is a model of a brick-by-brick project in the making. After almost 10 years of planning, two years of construction and a number of hurdles along the way, the new complex has opened at last.

Through my affiliation and many visits to the former facility over the years, I have witnessed the vision and plan for the development of this modern and much-needed facility. Built on a solid 35-year foundation of serving the evolving needs of seniors, Union Villa provides exemplary care in a spacious, contemporary, barrier-free and now energy-efficient facility.

As Ontario's fastest-growing demographic, more and more seniors will be moving into long-term-care facilities like Union Villa. I am confident that Union Villa will provide Markham seniors with a quality of life that is second to none.

Please join me in recognizing the leadership, hard work and determination that have gone into the making of Union Villa, and most especially, my former colleague and friend Graham Constantine, president and CEO. To my friends and residents of Union Villa, I applaud you. You deserve the best.

### EVENTS IN GODERICH

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** Today grade 10 students from Goderich District Collegiate Institute are touring the Legislature, and I would like to welcome them. I know that they will have a very informative day.

A few weeks ago, the Minister of Labour, the Honourable Steve Peters, had the opportunity to visit "Canada's Prettiest Town", being the town of Goderich in the beautiful riding of Huron-Bruce. Here, he had the chance to go underground to tour the world's largest salt mine, which is located in Goderich. As well, he was able to tour the assembly line at Volvo Motor Graders. Minister Peters discussed different issues from within these two industries, as well as listening to the workers and their unions.

Issues frequently mentioned were workplace health and safety, training and opportunities for current and future employees. The minister spoke about many new initiatives that this government has introduced in order to address these issues. Sifto and Volvo Motor Graders are the two largest employers in Goderich. Providing adequate training and ensuring health and safety are top priorities. These industries will need many new employees to do the job with all the right skills required.

It's certainly my pleasure to welcome the students from Goderich.

### ECONOMIC POLICY

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** A new sound is sweeping Ontario. It's hard to hear, but in the background of every McGuinty announcement regarding job creation, the faint sounds of mariachi music can be heard and the volume is getting louder. I can only assume that the mariachi music we're hearing is from parties being thrown in Mexico every time a company in Ontario packs up and heads down to warmer climates, both business and meteorological. Last week, Imperial Tobacco in Guelph announced it would be closing and heading to Mexico, leaving 550 people out of work.

It's becoming clear that we cannot trust the McGuinty Liberals to do their part to create a favourable business climate. This has been demonstrated by their energy plan, which is sloppy at best. It's having a devastating impact on the economy. Plant closures and job losses are begin-



ning to mount; certainly more than enough to fill the entire back of a napkin.

1340

We've learned we cannot trust the McGuinty Liberals for much, but one would certainly hope to expect some compassion and empathy from the Liberal MPP in Guelph—not so. The member was quoted in the Guelph Mercury as saying that the closure of Imperial will cause disruption in the lives of those who lost their jobs but that it is an indicator that the policies in the Liberal government are working.

The member owes those who will lose their jobs, as well as their families, a lot more than that—perhaps an explanation of how the Liberal government has failed them. I doubt that mariachi music will be of much comfort.

### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** The Municipal Property Assessment Corp., MPAC, has recently sent out the 2005 property assessments. Ward 30 in Toronto–Danforth and ward 31 in Beaches–East York, both in the east end of Toronto, have been particularly hard-hit. The member for Beaches–East York and I have heard from hundreds of residents, some with increases as high as 40%.

New Democrats and the Liberals, when in opposition, opposed the so-called current value assessment brought in by the previous Harris government, because we and the Liberals knew at that time that it would hurt residents in our older neighbourhoods and our part of the city. Our worst fears have been realized. Seniors on fixed incomes and struggling young families living in modest homes are being penalized because of rising property values, and they are being taxed on future equity that they cannot afford to pay.

Mr. Prue and I will be holding meetings in our community, and I can guarantee you that this is outrageous. People are going to be forced out of their homes, and we want to see action now, not six months from now or whenever the Ombudsman reports back. There are certain suggestions we want to make that can be done: “Successful appeals and rollback of assessments are not factored into as the new base rate forcing homeowners to appeal yearly. Homeowners should not have to go through this year after year. Make the appealed assessment the base assessment.”

There are more, which I will talk about at a later date. But mark my words, we are going to fight you every inch of the way.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** I rise today to congratulate Northumberland Hills Hospital and Quinte Health Care Corp. in my riding of Northumberland for their tremendous speed in delivering surgeries to the residents of Ontario.

The new wait time tracking system employed by the Ministry of Health has revealed that Northumberland Hills Hospital is first in delivering cataract surgeries within the Central East LHIN. In fact, patients going for cataract surgery at Northumberland Hills Hospital will have the fourth-shortest wait time in the province.

The median wait time for cataract surgery across Ontario is 85 days. However, the median wait time for cataract surgery at Northumberland Hills is 34 days. This is clearly an impressive figure.

I would also like to commend Quinte Health Care Corp. for being the first for cataract surgeries, hip replacements and knee replacements in the South East LHIN. For hip replacements, Quinte Health Care Corp. is third in the province.

Northumberland Hills Hospital and Quinte Health Care Corp. represent what the government's wait times strategy is all about. No doubt, the success of these hospitals could not have been achieved without the tremendous dedication and hard work of doctors, nurses, administrators and other health professionals. I commend everyone at Northumberland Hills and Quinte Health Care Corp. for rapidly providing quality health care to the residents of Northumberland.

### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):** Contrary to what some opposition members claim, the automotive industry in Ontario is not in decline, but rather the auto sector is growing. Some 138,000 Ontarians are currently working in the automotive manufacturing sector. In my riding of London–Fanshawe, over 6,000 people are employed in manufacturing, many of them in the auto sector.

One of the places some of my constituents work is the CAMI plant near Ingersoll. The plant currently assembles the Chevrolet Equinox and the Pontiac Torrent. CAMI is projected to have a record production year this year, producing about 190,000 vehicles. CAMI has recently hired more employees, and now employs 2,784 people.

This government recognizes the importance of the automotive industry. We have set up the \$500-million Ontario automotive investment strategy to help nurture growth in auto manufacturing, evidenced by the \$2.5-billion Beacon project investment by GM. This strategy is helping the industry produce more and helping the industry hire more. I am happy that the McGuinty government is continuing to make these investments.

Congratulations to CAMI on their recent success. I'm proud that this government is helping to create more jobs in my region.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### COLLEGES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA NÉGOCIATION COLLECTIVE DANS LES COLLÈGES

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 13, An Act to amend the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act with respect to part-time staff / Projet de loi 13, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la négociation collective dans les collèges à l'égard du personnel à temps partiel.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** Yes, I do, Speaker. The bill amends the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act to include part-time staff in staff bargaining units. Under the present act, part-time workers are not included in bargaining units and have no right to bargain collectively with employers.

I have to tell you that I agree with OPSEU President Leah Casselman when she says, "It's shocking that such a basic right is not recognized in our colleges."

I hope the members across will support this bill.

### ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 SUR L'ACCÈS À LA JUSTICE

Mr. Bryant moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 14, An Act to promote access to justice by amending or repealing various Acts and by enacting the Legislation Act, 2005 / Projet de loi 14, Loi visant à promouvoir l'accès à la justice en modifiant ou abrogeant diverses lois et en édictant la Loi de 2005 sur la législation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the minister have a brief statement?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** I'll defer to ministers' statements.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** I want to begin by recognizing a number of honoured guests with us here in the gallery, and I'm going to go in alphabetical order in terms of the organizations themselves: the president of the Advocates' Society, Linda Rothstein; the president of the Association of Law Officers of the Crown; the County and District Law Presidents' Asso-

ciation; the Criminal Lawyers' Association; the president of the Paralegal Society of Ontario; the president of POINTTS; the president of the Professional Paralegal Association of Ontario; the Small Investor Protection Association; the Society of Ontario Adjudicators and Regulators; the United Senior Citizens of Ontario; the Ontario Chamber of Commerce; the Ontario Provincial Police Association; the Law Society of Upper Canada; the city of Mississauga, Mayor Hazel McCallion; the Healthcare Insurance Reciprocal of Canada; the chair of Legal Aid Ontario; the Police Association of Ontario; the Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments; Seneca, Humber, Durham, Fleming and Sheridan community colleges; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Canada's Association for the Fifty Plus; the Canadian Medical Protective Association; representatives from the city of Toronto; Fidelity National Financial; First Canadian Title; the medical professional liability committee; the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police; the Ontario Bar Association; the Ontario Crown Attorneys' Association; the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association; and the Toronto Board of Trade. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all of them for being here.

1350

This afternoon, I introduced for first reading the Access to Justice Act, 2005. The legislation, if passed, will modernize and improve the people's access to the justice system, and it will provide greater openness, transparency and accountability. The bill would regulate paralegals, reform and streamline the justice of the peace system, amend the Limitations Act and create the Legislation Act.

An increasing number of people in Ontario offer and charge consumers for paralegal services. However, at present, paralegals are not regulated in Ontario. For many years, experts have recommended that paralegals be regulated. The regulation of paralegals would increase access to justice by giving consumers a choice in the qualified legal services they use, while protecting those who receive legal advice from non-lawyers.

The Law Society of Upper Canada, which has the experience, infrastructure and expertise to regulate lawyers, has made a bold move and agreed to transform itself into a regulator of professionals providing legal services. Treasurers past and present, like Mr. Hunter and Mr. Marrocco who are here, join together with benchers of the law society to act in the public interest and take on this very important responsibility that will help all Ontarians.

The bill would give the law society the responsibility of regulating paralegals. Paralegals would have a permanent role in the regulation of their own profession through the law society. A paralegal standing committee composed of a non-lawyer majority would play a key role in directing the affairs of paralegals.

I want to thank and congratulate the many pioneers and leaders, many of whom are in the House today, who made this issue that has been around for a very long time



a reality, and it is all in the public interest for Ontario. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for that.

Of course, another part of access to justice is our court system itself. The time is now to modernize the justice of the peace system in Ontario. The improvements in the Access to Justice Act, if passed, will ensure a more open and transparent appointment process for justices of the peace, with legislated standards for qualifications and a complaints and discipline process.

These improvements would introduce increased flexibility for the court in scheduling justices of the peace. For example, per diem justices of the peace could be dedicated by the judiciary exclusively to specific matters, including Provincial Offences Act proceedings, sometimes referred to as traffic court.

We have heard from municipalities, we've heard from leaders, mayors like Mayor McCallion, police and the judiciary, and now we are proposing to amend the Provincial Offences Act to permit witnesses to be heard by electronic means; for example, by video conferencing. Police officers would not necessarily need to attend in person in court for provincial offences proceedings, including traffic ticket charges. The goal is to reduce the time and cost for police in attending a trial and to ease the pressure on Provincial Offences Act courts. The amendments would permit alternatives for resolving municipal bylaw disputes without having to go to provincial offences court, ensuring the effective administration of justice.

If these amendments are passed, it would create the framework necessary for us to consult with municipalities, police and the judiciary on the implementation of video testimony in traffic court, for example.

Amendments to the Courts of Justice Act would, if passed, enhance the transparency and accountability to the public for the administration of the courts. The bill includes amendments to the Limitations Act that will, if passed, give consumers and business greater choice and not force them into unnecessary litigation. The bill would allow litigants to extend limitation periods to promote the settlement of disputes out of court. The amendments would ensure that Ontario retains its place as an international legal and commercial leader in business law.

Finally, this bill creates a new single source for rules about our laws, called the Legislation Act. If passed, it would increase access to justice and modernize the law-making system by bringing the way laws are published and interpreted into the electronic age.

The proposed Access to Justice Act is the result of extensive consultation between government, the bar, the business community, and consumer and protection groups and, if passed, would benefit all Ontarians.

I say to members of this House, and in particular to the justice critics and House leaders of the official opposition and the third party, who are one and the same, that I look forward to working together collaboratively on this bill and I look forward to working with all members of this House as we improve access to justice in Ontario.

## OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** I would like to provide the members with a report on the progress of the Office of the Registrar General. As you know, this office registers and maintains vital records for all births, deaths and marriages in Ontario.

Over the past 24 months, the ORG has faced a number of challenges, as members of this House can attest. Many MPPs received calls from frustrated constituents seeking help in getting their birth certificates and other services.

Today I would like to tell the House and the public what has been done and what other actions are being undertaken to help fix the problem. The first obstacle has been an unacceptable backlog for birth registration and birth certificate applications. At its worst, the turnaround time to get birth certificates was 20 weeks and more. Since this spring, the ORG has had more than a 90% success rate in meeting its eight-week service standard for processing properly completed birth, death and marriage certificate applications.

In June of this year, my predecessor, Minister Watson, introduced an on-line birth certificate application for children eight years of age and younger. I'm pleased to say this service has had a 99% success rate in delivering under-eight birth certificates within 15 business days, as opposed to that eight or 20 weeks I talked about earlier.

This on-line service is already handling more than 50% of all child applications, or about 25% of all birth certification applications.

As we announced in the throne speech a few weeks ago, we will be introducing a money-back service guarantee for on-line applications for all birth certificates—both children and adult. This guarantee will provide birth certificates from desktop to doorstep within 15 days or your money back. Next to come will be marriage and death certificates online.

Another issue that's been faced by the ORG was caused by the high volume of improperly completed applications. The ORG has dedicated additional resources to this problem. In addition—and this is important—the increasing number of on-line applications is reducing the number of improper submissions because, as you can appreciate, applicants are prompted to enter the proper information before submitting their applications.

Another challenge faced by the ORG was its telephone service. The majority of people who called each day received a busy signal. That was not acceptable, and we have taken action to fix it. Although this problem has not been completely resolved, I'm able to say the number of callers unable to get through has been dramatically reduced. We increased the capacity of the existing call centre and we added additional operators to help callers. The recorded message has been simplified and improved, providing callers with greater access to general information without operator assistance.

About 75% of the callers are looking for the status of their certificate application. In the months ahead,



consumers will be able to check the status of their applications on-line or over the phone without having to talk to an operator. Great strides have been made in this area but too many people are still getting busy signals. We will continue to take action to improve service.

1400

Staffing has also been an issue confronting the ORG. Over the years, the ORG's level of staffing has fluctuated greatly. I'm pleased to that your government has added more than 100 new permanent positions at the ORG in production, planning, training and other areas.

In 2003, a new computer system was brought on-line. This new technology was a prerequisite for other modernization activities. Now that it's functioning properly, it enables on-line applications, improves application tracking and ensures that certificates and registrations are processed properly.

Improvements have been made in the services provided by the ORG. Not everyone's experience will be perfect, but we are striving to increase customer satisfaction. Our ORG staff have been working hard to improve the service to the public, and I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank them. The ORG provides a necessary and valuable service to the public, and we are striving to ensure this service is provided as efficiently as possible.

We will continue to keep the House informed of our progress.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

#### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** This Liberal government frequently talks about co-operation in this House. Several weeks ago, with the former House leader, we asked about upcoming legislation. This was not on the radar screen, not mentioned at all. It appears to be the Attorney General in his usual role as handmaiden for The Toronto Star. The Star says "Jump," and the Attorney General says, "How high? And please bring the cameras."

Modernization of the justice system for this Liberal government is code for finding ways to slash justice ministry budgets through secret deals that will ultimately jeopardize public safety. In response to a question I asked earlier this week, the Premier denied that cuts to the justice ministry in excess of \$300 million were being considered. We know for a fact that the Premier's response was inaccurate. Perhaps his ministers aren't telling him what they're up to. We know they're certainly not above handing him inaccurate briefing notes. We don't hear the Attorney General or the Premier being upfront about their secret plans to close jails, about bullying police into pre-charge diversion, about diverting remands in the custody of organizations known for prisoner advocacy.

With respect to this legislation, there's no question we need more JPs. The Attorney General has had two years to do something about it. Without his friends at the Star

setting his agenda, this would likely still be on the back burner.

I do want to compliment the Attorney General for the commitment to allow retired individuals to serve on a per diem basis. I believe it was a serious mistake to make all JPs salaried, and they should not be restricted to traffic court. Ask a police officer if they can get a JP out of bed at 1 a.m. on a Saturday to do a bail hearing. Most of them won't do it. They're now on salary, they don't have to; they're above that sort of thing. We used to have per diem JPs go into the jails to do bail hearings, but now these lofty-salaried folks are above that sort of thing. The result is significant prisoner transportation costs from jail to court and back, and the enhancement of opportunities for prisoners to smuggle drugs and weapons into our jails.

We have serious concerns about due process; we have to look at the fine print. Audio/video testimony with the opportunity for cross-examination may be acceptable; affidavits, no. The ministers of justice should be looking at things like red tape. We know there's a red tape report sitting in the Minister of Community Safety's desk and nothing is being done about it. What about the paperwork involved in search warrants? Police court time: Traffic certainly is an area, but what about judges constantly giving out adjournments? What role is the crown playing here? What role is the judiciary playing in delaying these, calling police officers to sit in the court for adjournment after adjournment? The crown should be better coordinating with police services. That is not happening to the degree it should.

Finally, I want to mention the inclusion of paralegal legislation in this omnibus bill. It's truly regrettable. The minister made a commitment to our leader that he would share that legislation before tabling it in this House; that's his true commitment to democratic renewal. It's unfortunate it is not stand-alone legislation. It's going to cause significant delays in an initiative that all parties agree upon.

#### OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):**

I certainly appreciate the update provided by the minister, but I'd ask the minister: What date are you going to provide for the implementation? This is your second update within a couple of weeks. Provide the House with a date for implementation so we know what to expect.

Minister, I just want to say to you that people aren't applying for pizzas here. They are applying for a birth certificate with your on-line guarantee, which is the most important document that you can have to get your passport. The new issue that you're going to be facing, because the previous minister couldn't handle the efficiency problem, with ORG is a problem with respect to fraudulently completed applications. Identity theft is one of the major problems facing society today. You have raised that as your own government's priority. What we have in this situation now is an all-on-line approach



for adults and children, and you are going to face situations where there will be fraudulently completed applications. People want their own birth certificate; they do not want other people having access to it. How are you going to verify one's identity on-line?

As you know, identity theft is a great problem. What assurances are you going to give to this House before you implement this on-line procedure that you're going to be able to make sure that we have post-9/11 security protection measures, which we put in place as a government, and that you are not going to put that at risk?

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** First let me say to the Minister of Government Services that this carny line, this Canadian Home Shopping Channel pitch of getting your birth certificate in 15 days or your money back, is totally contrary to—folks don't want their money back; they want their birth certificates, for Pete's sake.

**Interjection:** And they're going to get them.

**Mr. Kormos:** They're not going to get birth certificates if all you're offering them is their money back if they don't get it in 15 days, if they apply on-line and if they are eight or younger, because your money-back guarantee only applies to applicants eight or under. So if you are a seven-year-old with a credit card and a computer and access to the Internet, you've got some sort of guarantee. But if you are a 35-year-old who desperately needs a birth certificate to apply for a passport to attend to a family matter in another country, you are still waiting month after month after month. You know better, Minister, because that's what our constituency offices are plagued with on a daily basis. It's not only youngsters but, more significantly, adults who have to wait months, even beyond months into years, before they get a birth certificate from your ministry. You have failed miserably. Your comments today provide no comfort for people across the province waiting for their birth certificates so they can attend to important business and important personal matters, important family matters.

#### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I want to say to the Attorney General that I recall over the course of the months preceding the summer break speaking with him on almost a daily basis, asking, "Where is the paralegal legislation?" because we had to get moving on it. Well, we get it; we get it bundled up in an omnibus bill. What were you thinking? What is the matter with you, Attorney General? You know full well that inclusion of the paralegal legislation in an omnibus bill can only serve to in fact prolong the passage of that bill through second reading, committee and third reading. You know that every party in this chamber is concerned and committed to the regulation of paralegals in the province of Ontario. But you also know full well that there are issues that you are purporting to address in this bill that are going to require a far different approach and far lengthier consideration and debate than the paralegal legislation in and of itself. There's nothing in this bill to address the Askov

nipping at the heels of every judge, every crown attorney, every criminal file in this province. Backlogs, as reported in 2003, which put our justice system at risk of having serious criminal charges withdrawn on a daily basis, are still not addressed.

There's nothing in this bill to address the plague of plea bargaining that is taking place in our courts because crown attorneys are understaffed and under-resourced, and there aren't enough judges, aren't enough courtrooms, aren't enough crown attorneys and aren't enough cops assisting those crown attorneys in the prosecution of cases, and that means the crown attorneys are accepting lesser pleas simply to clear the docket.

I'm sorry, Attorney General, but you don't need this legislation to appoint JPs on a non-partisan basis. If you were truly committed to appointing JPs on a non-partisan basis, you might have thought twice about appointing Herb Kreling, a Liberal city councillor from Ottawa and a former assistant to a Liberal MP from Windsor, whom you appointed as a justice of the peace on September 7.

If you were serious about the JP shortage, you don't need this legislation to appoint JPs to sit in provincial offences courts down in Hamilton, where you learned yesterday, as a result of Andrea Horwath raising this matter in this chamber, that trials of landlords under the Landlord and Tenant Act—bad landlords, landlords who abuse and victimize tenants—are taking place not in 2006 but in the beginning of the year 2007, because of the incredible shortage of justices of the peace in the city of Hamilton. I tell you, you know full well, as a result of reports having been given to you from any number of sources, that that shortage of JPs is pandemic. It's a crisis across this province.

You don't need this bill to appoint competent, non-partisan JPs; you just need the political will to do it. Rather than doing what you've got to do with respect to appointing adequate numbers of JPs, adequate numbers of provincial judges, adequate numbers of crown attorneys, you're hiding behind an omnibus bill that you know is going to take a considerable period of time to pass through this House, because you did it by way of an omnibus bill rather than by way of stand-alone paralegal regulation legislation, and you know it.

You've done nothing in this bill, Mr. Attorney General, to address the incredible backlogs in family courts, where abused women and their children continue to be victimized because you won't resource family courts to ensure those women have the litigation and the judicial oversight to protect them and their children. Shame on you, Attorney General.

#### DEFERRED VOTES

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We have a deferred vote on the amendment by Mr. Tory to the mo-



tion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1411 to 1416.*

**The Speaker:** Would members please take their seats.

Mr. Tory moved that the motion for an address in reply to the speech from the throne be amended by striking out all the words after, "We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session," and replacing them with the following:

"However, the current speech from the throne ignores the real problems faced by real working families throughout Ontario; and

"Whereas, in place of real action for Ontario's families this throne speech offers nothing more than warmed-over old announcements and 'novelty items'; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardship imposed by the new Liberal health tax during an already difficult time; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardships that Ontarians face in paying more for electricity, home heating, and vital medical care; and

"Whereas the throne speech continues to neglect the mounting problems of nursing supply, wait-lists, or timely access to care; and

"Whereas, based on this Liberal government's broken promises in their first throne speech ... Ontarians have valid reason to doubt the contents of the current one.

"Therefore, I regret to inform His Honour that the current Liberal government has failed to keep its election commitments, failed to listen to the real needs of Ontario families and have instead persisted in unreasonable taxation, undisciplined spending and continued neglect of the real needs of Ontarians. We therefore condemn this government for ignoring the real problems facing real Ontario families and demand immediate action before it's too late."

All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Baird, John R.	Marchese, Rosario	Runciman, Robert W.
Barrett, Toby	Martel, Shelley	Scott, Laurie
Churley, Marilyn	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Tascona, Joseph N.
Jackson, Cameron	Munro, Julia	Tory, John
Klees, Frank	O'Toole, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Kormos, Peter	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Yakubuski, John

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bartolucci, Rick	Jeffrey, Linda	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Kennedy, Gerard	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kular, Kuldip	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bountrogiani, Marie	Kwinter, Monte	Racco, Mario G.
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramal, Khalil

Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Matthews, Deborah
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill
Cordiano, Joseph	McGuinty, Dalton
Craitor, Kim	McMeekin, Ted
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil
Dhillon, Vic	Meilleur, Madeleine
Di Cocco, Caroline	Milloy, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol
Duguid, Brad	Mossop, Jennifer F.
Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Patten, Richard
Fonseca, Peter	Peters, Steve
Gerretsen, John	Peterson, Tim

Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Smith, Monique
Smitherman, George
Sorbara, Gregory S.
Takhar, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Watson, Jim
Wilkinson, John
Wong, Tony C.
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 21; the nays are 61.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

We now come to the motion of Mr. Crozier.

Mr. Crozier moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session."

All those in favour of Mr. Crozier's motion will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Same vote, reversed? Agreed.

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** The ayes are 61; the nays are 21.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

It is therefore resolved that an humble address be presented to his Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session."

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I want to bring members' attention to the west members' gallery and welcome Bob Frankford, former MPP for Scarborough East in the 35th Parliament. Welcome, Bob.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to welcome to the west gallery Mr. Bill Davidson and his two sons, Matthew and Geoffrey, who are sitting in the front row; they're both students at Crescent School.

**The Speaker:** That, of course, is not a point of order, but welcome.



## ORAL QUESTIONS

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. At any point since you found out about the tragic drinking water situation on the Kashechewan reserve, have you called the Prime Minister to discuss the matter?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I can assure you that my office has been engaged in a great deal of communication with the federal government, and we will pursue that.

I can also say that I've sent a letter again to the Prime Minister today offering our support, reconfirming that pursuant to the Canadian Constitution, the federal government has responsibility for matters pertaining to life on reserves. Also, if you visit the INAC Web site today, it will make it perfectly clear—and I'm prepared to quote that later, should the need arise—that the federal government continues to assume responsibility for all matters related to water quality on reserves.

So yes, I have been in communication, through my office, with the Prime Minister's office.

**Mr. Tory:** These kinds of code words about communication between your office and his office and so forth—I think the public of Ontario would have had reason to hope, and we in this House as well, that whatever the differences are that may exist, you might have initiated personally a call to the Prime Minister of Canada in the interests of maximizing what can be done to help the residents of these reserves.

Would you commit—beyond the contact back and forth between your offices, letters being written and so forth—to calling the Prime Minister this afternoon to begin the process of getting your two governments to start working together to help the residents of these native reserves with the drinking water challenges they face and end the jurisdictional haggling? Will you commit to making that phone call this afternoon?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition is asking a question that I would categorize as one that deals with tactics. I think the people of Ontario, and more specifically the community of Kashechewan, are worried about outcomes. We have acted. We have acted responsibly. There were extraordinary circumstances there which made it perfectly clear that there was a medical emergency, so we have stepped in and we have acted. We're in the process of evacuating people there, removing them to a place where we can care for their safety, health and well-being and make sure children are back in school.

As the Leader of the Opposition, I'm sure, understands, it's more than just a matter of actually having personal communication with the Prime Minister, it's a matter of acting, and that is exactly what we have done.

**Mr. Tory:** I think the Premier would agree that there's so much more that could possibly be done if you and the

Prime Minister could begin working together to form an action plan as between your two governments to deal with this even more effectively. That's all I was asking, that you phone him and see if there was one more thing that could be done as a result of the two of you—the Premier of Ontario and the Prime Minister of Canada—talking together. I think the people on those reserves and the people of Ontario have the right to expect that you can do that.

The Ontario Clean Water Agency issued a report two years ago. Your Minister of Natural Resources claimed that that report was not shared with your government and that you were not even aware of it until this past Monday, despite the fact that the Deputy Minister of the Environment sits on the board of the agency. Will you assure us today, and more importantly the people living on reserves across Ontario and the people of Ontario, that any future water reports that concern these reserves are, first, shared with and, second, acted upon immediately by your government?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I want to quote from the Web site for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada where it says, "Indian and Northern Affairs Canada works in co-operation with First Nations and other federal partners to ensure safe, clean drinking water and improved waste water services to the residents of First Nations communities." It goes on to say, "Programs and services for the provision of potable water and waste water services for on-reserve First Nations communities are provided through band councils, Health Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada."

We have, by virtue of an agreement entered into with the federal government in 1992, I believe, assumed responsibility for declaring emergencies as and when we recognize those as being in existence. That's exactly what we have done. To put it very succinctly, our job is to declare emergencies. The job of the federal government is to take steps to ensure emergencies don't happen. They did not take that action. We have taken our action. We have assumed our responsibility. We have evacuated the members from that community and we will continue to care for them in terms of their health and educational needs.

1430

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** With respect, your job is also to do everything you can to work with the government of Canada and any other government or any other body required to try and get as much done as possible for these people.

My question is to the Premier. On March 31, 2004, my colleague from Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant, Toby Barrett, raised a similar situation in this House respecting test results that found almost 30% of the wells on the Six Nations reserve in his riding contained dangerous levels of E. coli. What specific steps has your government taken since March 31, 2004, to ensure that our stringent drinking water standards are being met on the Six



Nations reserve and every other reserve in Ontario? What have you done?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm sure the leader of the official opposition will recall Walkerton. I'm sure he'll be familiar, at least to some extent, with some of the recommendations that flowed from that report, recommendations that were offered by Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor.

He said, among other things, in recommendation 89: "I encourage First Nations and the federal government to formally adopt drinking water standards...." Recommendation 90: "I encourage First Nations and the federal government to consider moving to a quality management standard over time...." Recommendation 91: "The provincial government should require ... OCWA to offer its services to First Nations ... on a normal commercial basis." That has been done.

I can also say that Minister Dombrowsky, in her capacity as the Minister of the Environment, on April 22, 2004, in fact made an offer of assistance to the federal government to assist with water quality issues on the Six Nations reserve.

**Mr. Tory:** I'll take that at face value. Then the question becomes after that, what actually happened about it?

But on the very same day, March 31, 2004, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant also posed questions about the lack of federal-provincial coordination on drinking water and why both levels of government weren't talking to each other, and that may have led to the very offer of help that you say the minister made. I believe this kind of thing—that governments that are elected by the very same people, that are financed by the very same taxpayers and then don't talk to each other, that write each other letters and have their offices communicate with each other but you will not pick up the phone and call the Prime Minister of Canada and say, "How can we work together to get faster action for these people?"—drives the taxpayers of Ontario crazy.

Since March 31, 2004, I ask the Premier, what specific efforts have you or your ministers made to offer every single ounce of co-operation that could be the case in dealing with these problems that exist with respect to water supply on First Nations reserves? What has been done?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, my friend opposite may not want to understand this, but I think the facts are important and here they are once again: The Canadian Constitution specifically provides that the federal government has sole responsibility for all matters pertaining to life on reserve. If you go to the INAC Web site today, it specifically says they have responsibility for water quality, including water potability. Beyond that, we have entered into an agreement—the NDP, when they were in government, entered into an agreement—that says we must take responsibility when there is an emergency to be found. We found one and we have acted.

Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor specifically recognized the difference in terms of jurisdictional responsibilities. It's not a nice word, but the fact of the matter is that rules make this country and this province work. He specifically

recognized the distinction. He specifically encouraged "... First Nations and the federal government to formally adopt drinking water standards...." He encouraged "... First Nations and the federal government to consider moving to a quality management standard over time...." He then goes on to a number of other recommendations and specifically says that when called upon to do so—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** The other thing that drives people in the country crazy is when they hear people citing the Constitution, as important as it is to set out the rules, as a reason—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Stop the clock. I can wait. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** What drives them crazy is when they hear the Constitution being cited as a reason why the first minister of Ontario cannot pick up the phone and call the Prime Minister of Canada and discuss the elements that might form the part of an action plan, even if it is their responsibility, as you've repeated today, the things that might be done, the things we think should be done and so on.

Why will you not pick up the phone and commit to doing it this afternoon and talk to the Prime Minister of Canada about the things that we in Ontario think should be done to help these people?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition may have little regard for our country's founding document and the fundamental principles that inform our relationship, but I see things differently. I hold that in the highest regard.

I am pleased at a statement made by the Prime Minister just a few hours ago, when in a scrum he was asked a question in regards to this particular matter, the matter of Kashechewan. He said, "Our government, the federal government, must obviously accept its responsibility, and will do so.... Now, the solution is one that requires obviously working with local aboriginal government, working with the provincial government, but fundamentally, this is our responsibility, and we accept it...."

I think there is some good news here now. We have a federal government that is clearly indicating that this is their responsibility. Again, I say for purposes of clear understanding and to be succinct, our job is to declare when we've found an emergency on a reserve; the federal government's job is to prevent that emergency from happening.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, yesterday your minister for aboriginal affairs went on television, looked into the camera and said with reference to the Kashechewan First Nation water crisis, "We only became aware of this on Monday." Meanwhile, Premier, we know that the Ontario Clean Water Agency, which is an arm of your government, wrote a report two years ago detailing the problems with respect to the water crisis. The deputy minister of your Ministry of the Environment



sits on the board of the Clean Water Agency. The Clean Water Agency was sent into Walkerton after the crisis happened there. This is an arm of your government, very close to you. Is it still your government's position that you didn't know anything about this until Monday?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Our government's position is grounded in an agreement which was entered into by the then NDP government with the federal government. That 1992 agreement specifically states that our responsibility is to declare an emergency when we find one. We found one. We declared an emergency, and we decided to evacuate the community. That is our responsibility. We have assumed that responsibility. Again, I would encourage the member opposite to visit the Web site for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada today, where it is clearly indicated that the federal government assumes responsibility for all matters related to life on reserve, including water potability.

**Mr. Hampton:** Yes, there is constitutional responsibility, but there is also something called the ethical responsibility of government. Your second warning about the Kashechewan water crisis happened when your health minister visited Kashechewan First Nation 18 months ago. Your third warning came when your community safety minister visited Kashechewan First Nation last spring. The people of Kashechewan, citizens of Ontario, told your ministers about the serious problems with their water supply. Is it still the position of your government that you didn't know anything about this until Monday of this week?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, I think the facts are important on this. I'm proud of the fact that my Minister of Health went up to the community and visited. The subject of the meeting up there was the need in the community for an additional land ambulance, which was provided.

I should also say that the Minister of Community Safety also had the opportunity to visit the community. Mr. Gilles Bisson, in response to that, made a statement in this House, and I want to quote from that: "I give full credit to the minister and the government for trying to respond, from what we can do on the provincial side, to deal with the issues, and I would have to say that the province has been very responsive up to now.... Shame on the federal government. They should wake up and do their jobs." I couldn't agree more.

1440

**Mr. Hampton:** I notice that you omit the rest of Mr. Bisson's statement, where he says that "the community is on a boil-water advisory. The water plant doesn't work." He is critical of the federal government. Then he says we must decide at "one point we as a province need to step in and start serving these people, who live in the province of Ontario, and provide them with the kind of infrastructure that we do in every other community in this province."

Premier, here is the issue: an OCWA report, from the Ontario Clean Water Agency, two years ago; your Minister of Health, who should be concerned about

health issues, visits the community; your Minister of Community Safety visits the community; and the people in the community point out that there are serious water problems. Now, if it's still your position that your government didn't know until last Monday, I'm asking you to table the briefing notes that would have been prepared for your two ministers before they went to Kashechewan First Nation. Table those briefing notes here today, before the end of question period. Will you do that, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, so that it's made perfectly clear to the leader of the third party, I'll quote from the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Web site: "Programs and services for the provision of potable water and waste water services for on-reserve First Nation communities are provided through band councils, Health Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada." It goes on to say, "Health Canada works in partnership with First Nations communities to ensure water quality sampling, monitoring and surveillance programs are in place on First Nations lands. Water sampling and analysis are done in accordance with the guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality. Health Canada assists First Nations in identifying and resolving water quality issues." Our responsibility—the leader of the NDP may not like to hear this—by virtue of the agreement that your government entered into with the federal government is to declare emergencies as and when they arise. We found that emergency, we declared one and we've acted.

**The Speaker:** New question. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** This is about your ethical responsibility as Premier; this is about the moral responsibility of your government. I asked you for the briefing notes that would have been prepared for your ministers before they went to the community. That would show whether your government knew or didn't know. I'm asking you again if you'll table that.

But I want to read you a letter I received today:

"Dear Howard Hampton...

"We would like to state for the record that" we "had told Minister Kwinter and Minister Smitherman, on two separate occasions of the water crisis here in Kashechewan. We discussed the appalling condition our residents are living in. We told them our water is undrinkable and our people are getting sick. We asked them ... for help...."

That is signed by Deputy Chief Rebecca Friday of the Kashechewan First Nation and Jonathan Solomon, Deputy Grand Chief of the Mushkegowuk Council.

Premier, why didn't your government listen?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm prepared to say it as many times as is necessary, and apparently I've got to say it again: Responsibility for all matters pertaining to life on reserves in Ontario and throughout the rest of the country lies exclusively with the federal government. The INAC Web site makes it perfectly clear that that most surely includes water quality and water potability issues.

We have a specific responsibility insofar as it relates to an agreement entered into in 1992 by the former NDP



government with the federal government which makes it clear that in a case of emergency, we are to declare that such an emergency exists and take the appropriate action. We have also, in keeping with Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor's recommendations, made it clear to the community and to the federal government that we are more than ready to assist with water quality issues which are, first and foremost, the responsibility of those two parties—the community and the federal government.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, you don't have to lecture people about the Constitution of Canada. I understand that. I often write to the federal government on behalf of First Nations in my riding. I often phone federal officials at the regional office of INAC here in Toronto. I recognize the constitutional authority issue, but this is about your moral responsibility as Premier and the moral responsibility of your government.

This is a very poor First Nation. This is a First Nation that has been crying out for help. They cried out for help to your cabinet ministers. It's about what your government did in response. It's about your minister responsible for native affairs, who goes on television and says, "We didn't know anything about this until last Monday."

I ask you again, Premier: Is that the position of the McGuinty government, that despite two cabinet ministers going there, despite a provincial agency's report about bad water, your government didn't ask any questions, didn't take any responsibility, didn't know until Monday?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The position of our government is very clear. When there is an emergency found on an Ontario First Nations reserve, our responsibility is to act. There was an emergency. We declared an emergency. We have taken action. Going forward, we've made it clear once again to the federal government, as we do to our First Nations communities, that we are prepared to play our continuing supportive role.

Again, the leader of the NDP may feel that we can somehow rush into any reserve on any pretext and assert any authority and exercise any rights. He is mistaken in that regard. We have a very specific authority. It has to do with emergencies. We found an emergency, we declared an emergency, and we've acted appropriately.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the only thing that changed on Monday is that the chief and the grand chief of the Mushkegowuk tribal council came here to Queen's Park and held a press conference. People are sick in that community today; they were sick half a year ago when your Minister of Community Safety visited; they were sick a year ago when your Minister of Health visited. The only thing that changed was that they finally came to this place and held a press conference.

Are you saying, Premier, that First Nations residents in this province can drink dirty water for two years, they can be sick for two years, they can cry out for two years, but unless they come here to Queen's Park and hold a press conference, it's not an emergency and the McGuinty government doesn't care? Is that your position?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** If it were truly and sincerely such an important issue to the leader of the NDP, then I would ask why it was not until this week that he raised this issue in this House? I think Ontarians need to know that.

Again, our responsibility is to declare emergencies where they genuinely exist. We learned just a few days ago, on the basis of information offered by a medical expert, that there was in fact a health-related emergency there. That's why we declared one. That's why we've moved to evacuate people from that community. That's why we're doing now what we can to improve the quality of their health and to ensure that children are in school.

I think our responsibility now is to ensure that we do everything we can to help those people recover from this particular emergency. And then, of course, it is incumbent upon the First Nation itself and the federal government to work together to restore a higher quality of life to that community.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** My question is for the Premier. I just think it's important that we should all be clear. Is it the Premier's position that when he has reports such as the one written by the water agency, when your ministers—ministers, plural—are briefed in detail repeatedly about a serious health issue, that your responsibility—you're taking the position that, as Premier of Ontario and as the government of Ontario, your responsibility goes no further than to sit back and wait, watch the Web site to make sure you've reminded yourself of who's responsible for this, and only when an emergency arises do you do anything—pick up the phone, call anybody, write a letter, issue a press release. Is that your position as Premier and head of the government of Ontario?

1450

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** If any party member would want to be intimately familiar with Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor's recommendations arising from the tragedy in Walkerton, it would surely be a member of the Conservative Party in Ontario. I would recommend those recommendations to my friend opposite. Through those recommendations, Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor makes it perfectly clear that he offers—in some cases, he encourages—First Nations and the federal government to formally adopt drinking water standards or to consider moving to a quality management standard over time.

With respect to our role—because my friend is wondering what might be our role—he specifically says we should require OCWA to offer its services. That has been done. He said we should actively offer, on a cost-recovery basis, training facilities. That has been set up, and 481 certificates have been issued so far. We are doing what we are required to do pursuant to Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor and pursuant to the agreement entered into by the NDP.

**Mr. Tory:** Just so we're clear then, talking now about the remaining 50 reserves on which there are boil-water orders in place—we'll take what the Premier just said—beyond offering the services of OCWA and beyond the



other matter you mentioned a moment ago, that is it. Beyond that, when you get reports, when you get briefed, if OCWA, in response to being involved, came up with some information, it's your position and the position of your government that your responsibility is to sit back, wait, keep your eye on that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Web site, remind yourself that it's not your responsibility and just do nothing until an emergency arises, and only then do you have any responsibility whatsoever to these people as the Premier of Ontario. Is that your position for the other 50 reserves where a boil-water order is involved?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** In addition to the Walkerton legacy which my friend has inherited, in addition to the extensive and dramatic cuts made to environmental protections, including water protection in our province, which is also my friend's legacy, he also inherited the abolition of a tripartite process which enabled us to work in a very positive and constructive way with our First Nations. I am pleased to say that we are working hard to put that deplorable history when it comes to First Nations, which we inherited from that government, behind us. We're working hard to establish a new, positive and constructive relationship. We look forward to doing more with our First Nations.

**The Speaker:** New question. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety. In April of this year, you went to Kashechewan First Nation. You saw with your own eyes the problems with the community's water system. The people of Kashechewan First Nation asked for your help. What did you do?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I'm delighted to be able to respond to the leader of the third party. Just to put the record straight, I was sitting in the House on a Tuesday when your member came up to me and said, "There is a flood up in Kashechewan. Are you aware of it?" I said, "Yes, I am. Emergency Measures Ontario is evacuating 190 people to Moosonee." He said, "Would you come with me tomorrow and see it?" I said, "If I can arrange it, I will." I then went up with him. He said, "Where are our briefing notes?" There were no briefing notes. I went out of my way to go up with him. I was up there to see the flood. There were no conversations with me at all about helping them with their drinking water. They told me they were on a boil-water advisory.

I should tell the Leader of the Opposition that that boil-water advisory has been in effect for more than five years—five years. What did they do about it? Nothing.

I'm suggesting to you that there were no representations to me at all, other than to say that their water treatment—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. There will be a supplementary, I'm sure.

**Mr. Hampton:** There was some media coverage of your visit there, and I want to quote from an article in the Voice, which covers basically that part of northeastern

Ontario: "We have a community that is in a perpetual boiled water emergency from a water treatment plant that failed just months after it was built." This is part of the media coverage of your visit.

I want to read the letter again from the First Nation: "We would like to state for the record that both myself and Deputy Grand Chief Jonathan Solomon had told Minister Kwinter and Minister Smitherman, on two separate occasions of the water crisis here in Kashechewan. We discussed the appalling condition our residents are living in. We told them our water is undrinkable and our people are getting sick...."

Minister, is it your position that the people of Kashechewan First Nation are not telling the truth?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I will tell you my position, and I'll quote the member from Timmins-James Bay when he spoke in the House the day after we came back. He said, "The position that the federal government takes is that they are not going to supply the community with any potable water by airlifting bottled water into the community. So my federal member, Charlie Angus, and I intervened with the federal government, and they said, 'OK, we'll provide potable water in bottles to children and people who are elderly who might be at risk.' Well, what happens to the other 80% of the community?..."

"Shame on the federal government. They should wake up and do their jobs. If not, step aside and let us do it."

I can say to you that they may have discussed it with the federal member, but they did not discuss it with me, because I was there to take a look at the flood conditions and the ice floes. I stand by that, and I can tell you that is what has happened.

## BORDER SECURITY

**Ms. Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** My question is for the Minister of Tourism. While issues regarding border security are federal in nature, constituents in my riding have expressed to me personally their concern regarding the passport policy that is being proposed by the United States and the economic impact this is going to have on our community. For more than a lifetime, the businesses in Sarnia-Lambton, many Canadians and Americans who work on either side of the border, and the flow of shoppers and visitors, have had a history of free-flowing travel across that border. Minister, could you please explain this proposed passport policy and the potential impact it could have for Ontario?

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Thank you for a very good question, a very timely question. There's no doubt about it that the proposal from the United States to require a passport for American citizens visiting Canada and then returning to the United States or for citizens of Canada visiting the United States—it affects Mexico and Bermuda as well—could have a potentially devastating effect on not only tourism, but other economic activity between the two nations. I think there's an understanding, in all border



areas in particular, of this impact. That's why several months ago the Premier of the province and I, and I think Minister Cordiano, visited Washington to meet with the head of the Department of Homeland Security—the Premier did that—and other officials in Washington to draw to their attention the potential adverse impact of such a policy and to suggest there would be reasonable alternatives that could be pursued.

We have now been joined by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the business community, the border mayors and others who are equally concerned, along with the federal and provincial governments, about this matter.

**Ms. Di Cocco:** Minister, while I understand that our first priority, of course, is ensuring that Ontario's border crossings are secure, this proposed policy will have serious impacts on tourism and other businesses in my community. I have spoken at length with a number of the leaders there, who indicate they are really concerned about this matter. How is our government protecting and promoting the interests of my constituents and all Ontarians?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I have encouraged, through communication with the federal minister, Mr. Emerson, and with others a country-wide approach to this so that all of us who are impacted by it in the border areas are going to take action to persuade the US government to change its mind in this matter.

I met last Friday in Buffalo with several New York state senate representatives and other officials and business people about this matter to draw it to their attention. There's a meeting in Niagara Falls again tomorrow in this regard.

There are several actions ongoing. We're responding formally to the invitation from the Americans to comment. Ultimately, the solution, in my view, is not the creation of a new security document but rather to take an existing document that people would normally have, such as a driver's licence, and add security measures to it. People on both sides of the border agree with that initiative on our part.

1500

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Health. The minister said in the Toronto Star that water problems were one of a variety of concerns raised when he visited the reserve in the north and that he called the federal minister of public health to speak specifically to the concerns that had been raised, and the reference appears to be about the water.

Today in the House, the minister said, and the Premier repeated, that you were there to discuss an ambulance, and that was that. Will you table your briefing notes from the trip you made to that reserve in this House today? Will you tell us precisely what you said to Minister Bennett? Perhaps most importantly of all, will you tell us if you ever did anything to follow up on that phone call

as Minister of Health for the province of Ontario? Did you ever do anything, or were you just looking at the Web site and deciding it wasn't your problem?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I guess you're looking forward to reading the Ipperwash report.

I want to say to the honourable member and to the members of the House that I initiated a three-day visit to northern Ontario in August 2004, with particular focus in the James Bay area on moving forward the integration of health services, which has been the number one health priority advanced from that community. Part and parcel of that meant that on Friday I did a tour of Kashechewan by air ambulance, where I visited the medical clinic. At that time, the staff in the medical clinic spoke to me about the issue of teen pregnancy. The next day, we returned to Kashechewan after overnighing in Moose Factory, where we met with a wide variety of First Nations officials who had flown in for a discussion on the issue of the integration of health services. During that visit, Chief Friday made it clear to me that the priority he wished me to work on was with respect to an ambulance. In a supplementary, I'll give the member some rate of progress on that issue.

**Mr. Tory:** It would be very kind of the minister to give us an update on the ambulance, but that's not what we're asking about.

To repeat what the deputy grand chief had to say in reference to the meeting with you, "We discussed the appalling condition our residents are living in. We told them our water is undrinkable and our people are getting sick. We asked them so many times for help over and over again."

You said in the Toronto Star that you called Minister Bennett in Ottawa about this. That was a good thing to do. My question was, did you ever do anything after that? What did you say to her, and did you ever do anything after that? Did you pick up the phone? Did you write a note? Did you do anything to follow up on that in your position as Minister of Health for the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** As I mentioned earlier, the priority that was impressed upon me by Chief Friday was the necessity of providing land ambulance services in the Kashechewan community, which did not have them at the time. Subsequent to that, my ministry assisted the community and a land ambulance—in fact, an advanced land ambulance—was made available to the community. Regrettably, it has subsequently been disabled and, accordingly, a new vehicle is in Moosonee awaiting the ice road to be delivered to the Kashechewan community.

What I characterized to the Toronto Star was that over the course of my three days, I heard a wide variety of concerns related to First Nations communities. At the end of my trip, I felt that it was appropriate to report those to the minister of public health for Canada. That's the step that I've taken. In the time since, I have had several meetings—and I have a list—with deputy chiefs of all First Nations communities. This issue has never been



brought up again. On the street corner of Bay and Grosvenor recently, I saw people from the Cree community related to James Bay and they did not raise the state of affairs with respect to water in the Kashechewan community with me directly at that time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** To the Minister of Health: When you visited Kashechewan First Nation, community leaders gave you a tour of the community, and they told you about their serious water problems. Yesterday, you told the media that you left Kashechewan First Nation sensing “no great urgency about its water.”

Minister, this is after Walkerton. This is after many people died and thousands of people became very sick from tainted water. You are the Minister of Health, responsible for protecting the health of Ontario residents. Can you seriously tell us that after Walkerton, and after the people of Kashechewan First Nation pointing out their water problems, you left with no sense of urgency about their water difficulties?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Yes, quite clearly. The tour that I took of the community on Saturday—I was in the back of a pickup truck. Photographic evidence, which I’m prepared to provide, indicates that I rode in the back of that truck with two New Democratic politicians, Gilles Bisson and Charlie Angus. We toured the community visually, we went up on top of the berm to gather its circumstances related to the river, and then we went and had a meeting with First Nations who had flown in related to the integration of health services in James Bay, which was being advanced as the number one health priority. I left that community with a very clear impression from Chief Leo Friday that the number one priority that they wished me to work on related to the provision of land ambulance services, and as I have already indicated in an earlier answer, we have delivered on that important priority. Over the course of my trip to northern Ontario, I saw a variety of circumstances at First Nations communities, and I thought it was appropriate to call the Minister of State for Public Health in the government of Canada, and I did that.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, a First Nation may ask you about land ambulance. The reality is that many of these First Nations have so many issues and so many needs that I wouldn’t be surprised at that. But they also made you aware of the serious problems with their water supply, just as they made your colleague the Minister of Community Safety aware of the serious problems with their water supply. As a minister of the crown, as the minister responsible for protecting people’s health, didn’t an alarm bell go off? Didn’t you stop to think, “You know what? After Walkerton, this is something that, as Minister of Health, I should check into”? Or is this just a case of the McGuinty government saying to people, “Don’t tell us, and we won’t ask”? Is that the standard by which you govern yourself?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The standard by which I govern myself is the view that duly representative officials, speaking with the voice of their community, are prioritizing their views in a fashion that I believe they have determined. Perhaps it was their more developed understanding that the issue that the member is going on about was a matter of responsibility of the federal government. What they clearly impressed upon me was the necessity of moving forward with land ambulance services. But what I find surprising is that the honourable member from Timmins–James Bay is perhaps one of the most aggressive—when it relates to the Hearing Society in Timmins or the community health centre in Kapuskasing, he asks me on a near-daily or at least weekly basis. He has not come back across the floor and advanced concerns related to the water quality in that community to me directly. I’ve met many times since then with the deputy grand chief and leadership from those First Nations communities. They have not advanced this issue as a priority; they advanced the ambulance issue. I work very hard on it, and I deliver.

## ECONOMIC POLICY

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** My question today is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Minister, we’re seeing some very positive indicators in our economy today. In my riding of Oakville, for example, the last year has seen unprecedented investment from the auto sector. It’s great to see that our economic plan is working. Under the NDP, Ontario lost 10% of its good industrial jobs, unemployment averaged 10% and over half a million people were out of work. The Tory design for the economy appears to be: Cut taxes, sit back and do nothing. Under the Tory government, the productivity gap between Ontario and the States doubled, Minister. How is our plan benefiting the Ontario economy?

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** I thank the member for a very good question. I’m going to recite some numbers because they are important and tell a tale. Last month, 17,300 jobs were created in Ontario, and the unemployment rate stood at 6.4%, the lowest in four years. We were able to cut our deficit almost in half, going from \$3 billion to \$1.6 billion—all in an effort to create a more positive climate. More important than just numbers, in my opinion, is the fact that we’ve taken a new approach to working with the private sector, creating a real climate for positive business conditions.

In addition to that, through the Minister of Research and Innovation, the Premier, we are fostering a new climate and a new culture for innovation to flourish in this province like never before through our research funding, to the tune of about \$1.8 billion over the next four years, looking to commercialize that research right here in the province of Ontario to create even more jobs and even greater prosperity for the future.



1510

**Mr. Flynn:** Thank you, Minister, for that response. These steps, as part of our plan, should provide a lot of confidence to potential investors in Ontario. Could you cite some of the more recent examples, maybe share those with us, of businesses that have had the confidence enough in recent times to invest in our economy?

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** I'd like to repeat this over and over again. The biggest example is the Toyota plant in Woodstock—almost \$1 billion. I might point out that the spinoffs from that investment are now looking at possibly 5,000 to 6,000 new jobs being created as a result of the Toyota plant located in Woodstock.

In addition to that, I'm happy to recite the fact that DMI, an American heavy-steel manufacturer, plans to build wind turbines in Stevensville. In life sciences, GlaxoSmithKline will invest \$23 million in its Mississauga plant, adding more jobs to its workforce. KOEI, a \$300-million Japanese software entertainment company, has opened a video game development studio in Toronto, which will serve as its North American headquarters, creating some 200 jobs over the next number of years. Ranbaxy, an Indian pharmaceutical company, just opened up operations in Ontario. So when you look at it, there are a lot of exciting things happening here in Ontario. Many companies are looking to invest in Ontario, and in fact, we're expanding our international presence—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.

#### TRADE DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade as well. Minister, last night, the president of Corn Products International told a public meeting in my riding that the company may shut down one or all three of its Ontario plants if Canada institutes a tariff on imported US corn.

I wrote you in September, asking you to ensure that the federal agency reviewing this consider all implications that might flow from the imposition of tariffs, including plant closures and job losses. I have yet to receive a response from you. Can you indicate to the people of Ontario, the communities that will be impacted by this, just what you are doing?

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** We are in talks with the federal government. I have forwarded my views with respect to trade matters to Jim Peterson, my federal counterpart. The whole issue around trade and softwood lumber with the United States concerns Ontario because, obviously, there are considerations around what might happen if a trade war escalates, and this is of great concern to Ontarians, given the fact that we export a great deal to the United States. It continues to be a matter that we monitor. So our view is that we have to take a comprehensive view but keep Ontario in mind when these trade disputes are unfolding before us.

We were in Washington earlier this year to talk to people in Washington about ongoing trade disputes with the United States. Softwood lumber continues to come up as a sore point, but we wanted to impress upon the Americans that there are many other considerations around the border. Keeping that border open, keeping goods flowing south, is a very important thing, and we want to continue to do that.

**Mr. Runciman:** If you wade through that baffle-gab, I think the real answer is he's done absolutely nothing. We're talking about 240 people in the community of Cardinal. That represents about 20% of the jobs in that one municipality. We know there are three plants in jeopardy here. The findings of the agency are going to be made public November 15. The decision on tariffs will be announced December 15. The clock is ticking. Will you do your job? Take some responsibility here. Ontario has a role to play. You have a role to play as the minister. Make your views known. Make sure that this agency, before it makes a decision, knows all of the implications. Please do that.

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** I find it passing strange. This is a member who says, on the one hand, when we help the auto sector, that it's corporate welfare. On the other hand, he wants us to intervene every time there's a decision being made, and this is an independent body making a decision.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** That's right. It's an agency at arm's length which will make this decision. But when it doesn't suit his purposes, he wants us to intervene. That's just like him, wanting to have it both ways.

We're doing what we have to do. This is a matter before that agency. It will make its decision, as it should.

#### COMMUNITY COLLEGES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** My question is to the Premier. In community colleges across this province, the quality of education is under strain because cash-strapped schools are hiring half-time instructors. As many as half of Ontario college classes are taught by part-time instructors who don't have the time or the resources to focus on the needs of their students. They are hired because they work cheap, and they work cheap because they are legally barred from forming a union. Premier, why are part-time college instructors denied the right to organize?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Training, College and Universities.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** The member is correct that colleges and universities have been under strain over the years from an absence of government assistance to improve the quality of education. That's why the McGuinty government is investing an extra \$6.2 billion in the quality of education. That's why this year alone colleges



will see their operating grants increase by more than 13%—almost 14%—which contrasts significantly with the action of the NDP, which during their last couple of years actually cut grants to colleges and reduced the per-student funding. We are investing in the quality of education at our colleges by investing in the people and the resources that students need to improve the quality of education. That's the appropriate route to take.

**Mr. Marchese:** So much arrogance and so much blah, blah, blah. It's unbelievable.

Ontario's part-time college workers are exploited, with lower wages and little or no benefits. Comparable part-time workers at the province's universities and secondary schools have the right to free collective bargaining. Ontario is the only province in Canada to deny this basic right to part-time college workers. College students don't want part-time instructors, they want and, in my view, deserve a quality education. Minister, will you ensure, by supporting my bill, that part-time college workers can exercise their right to organize?

**Hon. Mr. Bentley:** It's fascinating. The member and the NDP must have been cleaning out the garage because this is virtually the same bill they introduced in 1992, and what did they do with it? Absolutely nothing. The NDP had five years to bring about the same effect, and they did nothing. At the same time—they didn't end there—they decreased the amount of money for the quality of education at colleges, they took money away from the people who work at our colleges and they brought in the social contract.

We're taking a different approach by investing in students, investing in colleges and investing in the people who teach. That's the right approach. The member should stop cleaning out the garage and get on with the quality of education in the province of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. I'm sure someone wants to ask a question. Order.

#### HEALTHIER SCHOOLS STRATEGY

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** My question is to the Minister of Health Promotion. Recently, our government announced that students will receive 20 minutes of daily physical activity on top of the mandated 90 minutes per week they currently receive. In 2004, the chief medical officer of health, Dr. Sheela Basrur, reported that an obesity epidemic threatened the health of all Ontarians, and she highlighted concerns specifically for children and adolescents.

Many of my constituents are pleased that we have begun to move on this issue. However, some, including the Ontario Medical Association, have called on us to increase our mandate to one hour. I understand that an hour of activity would take away from time spent on other important aspects of the curriculum. However, the health of our children is in danger. Minister, how do you respond to the claim that 20 minutes is not enough?

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I thank the honourable member for the question. I was pleased to be a part of the announcement with the Minister of Education in Minister Cordiano's riding a few weeks ago. As the honourable member correctly pointed out, there is an epidemic of obesity, particularly amongst young people. There's been a 300% increase in obesity rates in young people in the last 25 years.

The 20 minutes of physical activity, to be very clear, is, number one, just a start. Secondly, it's in addition to the two to three periods a week that young children in elementary school participate in in their regular phys. ed. classes. We're putting \$10.7 million into training and providing resources for teachers to ensure that the 20 minutes of physical activity in the classroom is effective to get the heart moving and to get people physically fit. It's a holistic approach, in addition to removing junk food from vending machines and providing new guidelines for nutritional standards in school cafeterias.

1520

**Mr. Brownell:** Keeping kids active is an important aspect of our overall healthy school plan. Important first steps to a healthy living strategy include banning junk food in schools, removing user fees for after-school facilities and introducing a mandatory 20 minutes of daily physical activity.

I was pleased to see that our government's announcement included community leaders and role models, including some distinguished members from the Toronto Maple Leafs, one being Chad Kilger from my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Brownell:** For sure.

Community involvement is essential to combat the growing crisis in childhood obesity. I am concerned that parents and community are not involved enough in the strategy to keep kids active. What can we, as both a government and as community members, do to promote physical activity for children?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** This is a good example of the partnership between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health Promotion. We also have, for instance, the communities in action fund, which is a very successful program that provides opportunities for programs like International Walk to School Week, which I and a number of other members participated in, to encourage parents to act as role models for young people. We've also got, as we talked about yesterday on the community use of schools, a very successful program where individuals can rent facilities, with parents as coaches and as mentors, at a much lower rate than what has been the case in the past.

The NDP came to that press conference in the school where Mr. Kennedy and I were, and they were saying, "It's not enough time." Well, you know what? With the NDP, it's never enough, yet when they were in power, they did absolutely nothing to improve the quality of physical education in schools for young people throughout Ontario. It's never enough with the NDP.



## INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Two weeks ago, in response to the 17 deaths at Seven Oaks Home for the Aged here in Toronto, you indicated that, in your appointment of Dr. David Walker, you would be moving forward on this basis in a very short number of days. I spoke with Dr. Walker yesterday, and he advises me that he will not be able to begin his work until the latter part of next week.

Minister, since you made that announcement, four more people have died at this location. My question to you is very simply, are you or your ministry implementing any new safety and protection measures for the staff and residents of Seven Oaks and the 10 other homes that are owned by the city of Toronto at this time?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I find the question somewhat curious, so as to suggest that there is something germane to Toronto.

With respect to the appointment of Dr. Walker, he is, with the benefit of a secretariat and support from the ministry, working toward his work plan. There is development of that ongoing, and we will be responding appropriately to the advice and direction being provided. No advice has been provided, with respect, further to the necessity, beyond those things which are in the matter of course of long-term care, with much greater compliance and inspection than under the previous government. We're very satisfied that the quality and safety of our 600 long-term-care homes in the province is in a very high state.

## PETITIONS

### MINIMUM WAGE

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It says:

"Whereas the minimum wage in the province had not been increased in more than 15 years from \$6.85. This has caused great hardship on lower-income people, because prices for basic necessities like food and shelter are increasing because of inflation but wages to these people still remain the same.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ensure that legislation passed by the McGuinty government to increase the minimum wage to \$8 is supported by all parties in the Legislature."

I agree with this petition, and I affix my signature. I pass this to page Graeme.

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** It's my pleasure to introduce a petition from the riding of Durham.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

"Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I'm pleased to support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham.

### MACULAR DEGENERATION

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** I'm pleased to present the following petition on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls. It's signed by many, many people, including Pamela O'Donoghue, Liz Watson and Heather Somerville. The petition reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet) and there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry) that are not covered.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment cost for this disease is astronomical for most constituents and adds a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program."

I'm pleased to submit this petition on behalf of my riding.

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have here a petition signed by a great number of constituents.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

"Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and



"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I affix my signature, as I agree with it, and I will give it to Alexandra to bring it up to the table.

1530

### MANDATORY RETIREMENT

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"Whereas existing legislation enforcing mandatory retirement is discriminatory; and

"Whereas it is the basic human right of Ontario citizens over the age of 65 to earn a living and contribute to society; and

"Whereas the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories have also abolished mandatory retirement in various forms; and

"Whereas ending mandatory retirement is a viable means of boosting the Ontario labour force and accommodating the growing need for skilled workers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government should act by abolishing mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is best achieved by passing Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement."

I put my signature to this.

### LESLIE M. FROST CENTRE

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** "Recommendations for the Frost Centre

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government announced the closure of the Leslie M. Frost Natural Resources Centre in July 2004 with no public consultation; and

"Whereas public outrage over the closure of the Frost Centre caused the government to appoint a working committee of local residents to examine options for the future of the property; and

"Whereas the working committee has completed their consultations and has prepared recommendations for the provincial government that include a procedure to follow during the request for proposals process; and

"Whereas the Frost Centre has been an important educational resource for the community, and continued

use of the facility for educational purposes has widespread support;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should retain public ownership of the Frost Centre lands and follow the recommendations of the working committee regarding the request for proposals process."

This was brought to me by Environment Haliburton, Heather Ross's group, and I hope Minister Caplan is listening.

### MANDATORY RETIREMENT

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have a petition today in support of Bill 211.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas existing legislation enforcing mandatory retirement is discriminatory; and

"Whereas it is the basic human right of Ontario citizens over the age of 65 to earn a living and contribute to society; and

"Whereas the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories have also abolished mandatory retirement in various forms; and

"Whereas ending mandatory retirement is a viable means of boosting the Ontario labour force and accommodating the growing need for skilled workers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government should act by abolishing mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is best achieved by passing Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement."

I'll affix my signature to this petition.

### WILDLIFE PROTECTION

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario....

"We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned that the care and release restrictions imposed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources which are in violation of the international standards will eliminate the provision of responsible wildlife services in our community.

"We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to work with wildlife rehabilitators to ensure progressive, humane and responsible regulations that reflect the international care and release standard that states:

"Orphaned wildlife should be raised with others of their own species, to learn proper conspecific behaviours, and the group should then be released together in appropriate natural areas, with the transitional care for those species that require it, generally within the city or county of origin."

I affix my name.

## FILM RELEASE

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** It is my distinct pleasure to introduce a petition from my riding of Durham.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas a Hollywood movie entitled *Deadly* and based on the horrific crimes committed by Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka is scheduled to be released in Canada this year; and

"Whereas out of respect for the victims, their friends, family and communities, we strongly object to the depiction of this tragedy for the purpose of entertainment; and

"Whereas these depraved and horrific crimes have already saddened and disturbed those who followed the high-profile trial coverage in the media; and

"Whereas further portrayal of these events may tend to glorify those who are guilty and desensitize the public to the horror of the crimes;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, declare that we will boycott this movie in Ontario theatres or video stores; moreover, we also urge the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to investigate all measures that may be taken by the provincial government to prevent the showing of this" depraved "movie in theatres and/or its distribution anywhere in Ontario."

This is a sensitive petition, and I'll be signing it to support my constituents.

## FALLSVIEW CASINO

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** I'm pleased to present this petition on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Falls Management Group made numerous commitments to the city of Niagara Falls when it was awarded the Fallsview Casino contract in 1998"—by the previous government

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"Niagara Falls residents are still waiting for the on-site amenities and the off-site attractors. We believe that the government of Ontario should ensure that all promises made at the time of the awarding of the contract" in 1998 "be fulfilled."

I'm pleased to submit this petition.

## HIGHWAY 35

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** "Highway 35 four-laning

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas modern highways are economic lifelines to communities across Ontario and crucial to the growth of Ontario's economy; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has been planning the expansion of Highway 35, and that expansion has been put on hold by the McGuinty government; and

"Whereas Highway 35 provides an important economic link in the overall transportation system—carrying commuter, commercial and high tourist volumes to and from the Kawartha Lakes area and Haliburton; and

"Whereas the final round of public consultation has just been rescheduled;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government move swiftly to complete the four-laning of Highway 35 after the completion of the final public consultation."

This was brought to me by many members of the Kawartha Lakes Chamber of Commerce.

## GO TRANSIT TUNNEL

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** "To the Parliament of Ontario, the minister of infrastructure services and the Minister of Transportation:

"Whereas GO Transit is presently planning to tunnel an area just south of St. Clair Avenue West ... making it easier for GO trains to pass a major rail crossing;

"Whereas TTC is presently planning a TTC right-of-way along all of St. Clair Avenue West, including the bottleneck caused by the dilapidated St. Clair Avenue-Old Weston Road bridge;

"Whereas this bridge (underpass) will be: (1) too narrow for the planned TTC right-of-way, since it will leave only one lane for traffic; (2) it is not safe for pedestrians (it's about 50 metres long). It's dark and slopes on both east and west sides creating high banks for 300 metres; and (3) it creates a divide, a no man's land, between Old Weston Road and Keele Street. (This was acceptable when the area consisted entirely of slaughterhouses, but now the area has 900 new homes);

"Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that GO Transit extend the tunnel beyond St. Clair Avenue West so that trains will pass under St. Clair Avenue West, thus eliminating this eyesore of a bridge with its high banks and blank walls. Instead it will create a dynamic, revitalized community enhanced by a beautiful continuous cityscape with easy traffic flow."

Since I agree with this petition, I'm delighted to put my name to it.

## ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** This is my third petition. There are a number of petitions presented to me at my riding office in Durham.

"Pharmacists Care

"Petition to the Government of Ontario in support of Ontario Pharmacists

"Whereas we, the undersigned,

"Share the concern of Ontario pharmacists that the government is considering changes to the drug program that could restrict access to some medications or force patients to pay more for their prescriptions, placing



seniors, low-income families and many other Ontarians at risk;

“Recognize that these changes could affect the ability of pharmacists to continue to provide quality programs and services, decreasing Ontarians’ access to essential health care services; and

“Believe that pharmacists, as advocates for quality patient care, should have a greater role to play in advising the government when it considers changes that will affect the health of Ontarians,

“We hereby petition the government of Ontario:

“To work with Ontario pharmacists to prevent cut-backs to the drug program; and,

“To establish a process that brings pharmacists to the table to provide solutions that will protect patients and strengthen health care for all Ontarians.”

This makes eminent sense, and I’ll be signing it on behalf of my constituents in Durham.

1540

### PROSTATE CANCER

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** I’m pleased to present this petition on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls, signed many people, including Linda Pizzi and Louise Leyland. The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s health insurance plan does not cover the cost of PSA (prostate specific antigen) test as an early method of detection for prostate cancer in men;

“Whereas mammogram tests for women are fully covered by the Ontario insurance plan for early detection of breast cancer and PSA test for men is only covered once the physician suspects prostate cancer,

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We support Bill 201. We believe PSA testing should be covered as an insured service by the Ontario health insurance program. Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canadian men. At least one in every eight Canadian men is expected to develop the disease in their lifetime. Some five million Canadian men are currently at risk in their prostate-cancer-risk years, which are between the ages of 45 and 70. For many seniors and low-income earners, the cost of the test would buy up to a week’s worth of groceries for many individuals.”

We ask the government to support covering the cost of these tests.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I rise pursuant to standing order 55 to give the Legislature the business of the House for next week.

On the afternoon of Monday, October 31, the government will be calling Bill 197, and the evening is to be confirmed.

On Tuesday, in the afternoon Bill 210, and to be confirmed in the evening.

On Wednesday, November 2, in the afternoon an opposition day, and the evening will be confirmed.

Thursday, November 3, the afternoon to be confirmed.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### ENDING MANDATORY RETIREMENT STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT DES LOIS POUR ÉLIMINER LA RETRAITE OBLIGATOIRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 24, 2005, on the motion for second reading of Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement / Projet de loi 211, Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne et d’autres lois pour éliminer la retraite obligatoire.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Time for questions and comments.

**Mr. John O’Toole (Durham):** It’s a pleasure to listen to the member for Ottawa–Orléans with respect to Bill 211. It has been said here that we respect a person’s right to decide in many cases. That’s what this is about. Some would say it’s discrimination based on age that the government is trying to deal with. It’s to that extent. But I think it’s like a lot of the initiatives of this government that really trouble me. It’s the agenda of no consultation. I’ve heard from university professors and other persons who want to continue their careers that this is the right thing to do. It’s in that interest that John Tory and our party have discussed this at length. John Tory has encouraged us to consult with our constituents and seniors. It’s in that consultative vein that we have elected to support this initiative giving people the choice.

The NDP is against most things, but in this case, they have a different agenda. Their agenda here clearly is that they want to protect the younger workers. Again, listening to their concerns, I think that people should have choices and the right to make those choices. That’s what this essentially is about.

The member for Ottawa–Orléans made some points. He has served in government at the municipal level and brings some common sense to it, but it’s the consultation with the people of Ontario that is missing.

If you put this together with the other legislative initiatives such as the one dealing with pensions, it troubles me. I’m always suspicious of commitments and promises by the McGuinty government. It’s better to go with a government you can trust, like Mr. Tory, and that’s what I look forward to in my remarks—



**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Further questions and comments? Are there any more questions and comments?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize for running around a little bit here.

I wanted to briefly comment on the remarks made by the member for Ottawa—Orléans. He is quite correct: It's basically doing the right thing here in Ontario. The legislation regarding mandatory retirement, if passed, would end mandatory retirement in a fair and balanced way that would not undermine existing rights and benefits. Ontario workers deserve the right to choose when they want to retire. Think of how many people have been able to be successful in life after age 60 or 65. A lot of people, even those into their 70s and 80s, are wanting to work and do things.

I'll never forget my own experience of going in to see a family doctor. He had reached 65 and he said to me, "I'm not going to retire. I don't want to retire. I want to keep on working because I enjoy my job."

This legislation is giving people that opportunity to continue to work if they want to. We shouldn't say, "You've reached this number, 65, and you have to pack it in." I think that's wrong, and the government is moving in the right direction here.

What's important is that there is an aspect of discrimination by causing people to retire when they are 65. I myself don't want to see any of this type of discrimination existing. If a person wants to retire, whether it be at age 55, 60, 65 or even 70, so be it. We shouldn't be legislating a date or a number any more. That was done by Bismarck back in the 1800s. He picked that age over 100 years ago. I think it's time to change that rule and that law.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any further questions or comments? Seeing none, the Chair recognizes the member for Ottawa—Orléans.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** I thought I had five minutes to get through some of the points I wanted to make, but I have just two minutes.

"Your skills, ability, drive and determination do not stop once you turn 65." This was in the minister's speech when he started it.

« Dans la mesure du possible, nous devrions tous avoir le droit de choisir le parcours de notre vie. Le droit de choisir ne devrait pas être restreint à une minorité de gens comme les travailleurs indépendants et les hommes et femmes politiques. »

We should all have that right to work beyond 65, but the right is only one thing. What we really don't look at are the benefits we get from having people work beyond 65. We have a problem in this country—like other countries, some in Europe—where in 20 years we're going to go from 12% of our population being seniors to 20% in 2025—almost double. The number of dependent people for every 100 workers will rise from 45 to 54. That's going to put pressure on our governments in many ways.

So we have to work toward getting more people in the workforce.

It is estimated that this legislation will keep 4,000 more seniors in the workforce beyond 65. We should be getting rid of any disincentives for people continuing to work. We should be making sure there is retraining, so we can keep seniors in the workforce and so be able to carry some of these heavy costs we're going to get as seniors age, as health costs go up. We're going to need more workers.

This is good legislation. It was well supported across the province and I will be glad to see Bill 211 enacted as legislation in this House.

1550

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** It's a pleasure to be able to rise and speak, in this case in support of Bill 211, which will allow people to retire when they see fit, with dignity, and be able to work past the age of 65.

The act is called An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement. Just for those who haven't been part of the debate thus far on the bill, it is only three pages long. It reflects the change—just to take out the section of all the legislation where it requires people to quit working at 65 in the Human Rights Code, which of course says that it is not discriminatory to have early retirement or to have retirement at 65, and this will change that, that in fact employers cannot force retirement at 65.

The Coroners Act requires a change, the Election Act requires a similar-type change, and the Health Protection and Promotion Act, the Ombudsman Act, the Public Service Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. Then there's just the title of the bill.

I rise today to speak in support of the bill. Until I heard the comments of the last member from the government side in his two-minute wrap-up of his presentation—I'm a little concerned that the one priority he was putting on the need for this bill was how government was going to be able to get more people into the workforce and help the economy in our province. As I was looking at the bill, that wasn't why I was supporting the bill; I was supporting this bill because I want to be fair and provide opportunities to seniors or to the people who have reached the age of 65 but who are not ready to retire.

I believe that everyone in this province should have an opportunity to make their own decisions on when they want to go to work and when they want to retire. I read here in an article—I can't tell you which paper it's out of—where it says, "Surveys show as many as three quarters of those approaching retirement—young seniors—plan to continue working in some capacity well into their 70s, as much because they feel they are still vital as because they need the money. Therefore, say some career counsellors, traditional retirement is increasingly becoming a career transition point instead of the end of work."

That is so important, but I don't think we should have laws in this country that mandate that you must make a



career change because of the timing. It's a great opportunity for people to change careers, but at the same time, I don't think that when you reach the point of 65 you must change careers because the law no longer allows you to work where you're working.

In the introduction of the bill, I'm also a little confused with the government's approach on things. A number of months ago, there was a bill in the Legislature that dealt with flexible work hours, that provided the opportunity for people in the workforce—not just people who were reaching retirement age, but people in the workforce generally—in consulting with the employer, to come to an agreement on flexible work hours so that if they needed to be home at certain times or doing other things, they could actually work up to 60 hours in any given week and then work fewer hours in the next week to provide flexibility in their living conditions and lifestyle.

This government decided that that was inappropriate, that people in the workforce should not have the choice to work when it was more advantageous to their living conditions. That bill was the law, and the government of the day decided that they were going to eliminate that law because giving people choices as to where and when they should work was bad.

Now we have a bill—and I agree with it—that does exactly the opposite. I would suggest that they don't seem to have a plan about what it is that people should be able to make their choices on, when the government should tell them they have to work, what hours they have to work and how many continuous hours they have to work, and now, that they can keep working when they reach a certain point in life. There's a similarity there, not to the extent of the people, but in the type of event that the government is creating. In fact, in one they're providing the ability to make a choice, and in the other one they're taking away the ability of those workers to make the same choice. I would say that proves that they have absolutely no plan.

On this bill, it was the Progressive Conservative government that first introduced Bill 68, which was the Mandatory Retirement Elimination Act, 2003. It was introduced two years ago, on May 29, 2003, to end mandatory retirement. If this bill had passed, it would have been the law today—not today, actually; it was to be implemented January 1 of this year—and we would already be in a situation where we would have eliminated this retirement.

We have to remember we're two years down the road, so we have two years where people who were 63 when the bill was first introduced are now being forced to retire, and the whole two years of the workforce is still under the old regime, as opposed to the new one. The Liberal government decided to delay this bill by two years, and many of the people, of course, were not able to work past their retirement time, and they had to either quit working or change jobs.

I think it's important to recognize, as I said earlier from that newspaper clipping, that a lot of these people

who are being forced to retire are doing so at quite a detriment to their lifestyle and to the way they live, because they are not necessarily in a position to have sufficient pensions and sufficient revenues to be able to live the life they wanted to live. So they are now living at a lower standard because of the delay of two years.

As I mentioned, in 2003, the Progressive Conservative government, under the Minister of Citizenship, Carl DeFaria, introduced the legislation ending this retirement. Again, I believe all Ontarians should enjoy equal opportunity and the freedom to participate fully in the lives of their communities. Our party believes that equality of opportunity must also extend to the workforce.

Just letting seniors work longer isn't the only answer. We want to make sure that government is committed to increased funding for seniors and seniors programming and the things that our seniors need. We are still, as a party, committed to ensuring that services continue to meet the needs of our growing and aging population now and in the years to come, which again is why I support this legislation, even though it should have been in place by now if the McGuinty Liberals had made this legislation a priority.

Seniors are challenging society's assumption about aging and are breaking new ground. We believe that seniors should have the right to continue to contribute to the economy as they choose. Going back to the statement previously made, I think it's important: as they choose, not as government chooses.

Since 1995, Conservatives have always supported policies and services that promote dignity, independence and quality of life for our seniors. We worked to ensure that they were able to contribute fully to their communities, and this proposed legislation will help meet that commitment to ensure that seniors live in dignity and respect.

As I mentioned, we shouldn't overlook the fact that in the past, many seniors, upon retirement, were forced into living conditions different from what they were before, and I think we need to make sure that the policies government puts in place will make sure that it is not a great detriment to the ability of seniors to support themselves.

This legislation is simply doing the right thing: It puts the choice to work into the hands of individuals, not governments or employers. For the vast majority of workers, these proposals will have absolutely no effect on their retiring. Most people, when they get to 65, will still want to retire. For some, however, this will remove an unfair barrier to the freedom of choice. Individuals may simply want to remain active in their chosen career.

For many seniors, employment is fundamental to their sense of dignity and self-worth. Others may face economic hardships if they are forced to retire, and live on fixed income. Forcing people into retirement when they reach 65 robs our economy of skilled workers, as was mentioned by the previous speaker, and it denies seniors the opportunity to continue contributing to our economy. Again, I think it's important to recognize that this is their choice. It should be their choice, not the government's choice.



I believe that Ontario seniors have earned the right to decide whether they want to continue to work into their golden years, but I want to point out that many people I talked to in Oxford say that when they were forced to retire, that was definitely not the start of the golden years. In fact, it was the other way around. The golden years were leading up to their retirement, not after they were forced into retirement. As I said earlier, more needs to be done for seniors than just telling them that they can keep on working.

1600

Yesterday I had the opportunity to speak to 150 seniors in my riding of Oxford, and health care was the biggest issue raised in our discussion. No one talked about mandatory retirement, and whether they should or shouldn't. I have to admit, it was during the working hours of the day, so I presume most of the people in that room were already retired. But health care is a concern to everyone, young and old.

Governments have been faced for a long time with the challenges of excessive wait times, the lack of physicians and beds and an aging population. Of course, the longer people live, the larger the group of seniors that we need to deal with. In government, we see increased funding each year and we continue to implement programs to assist the people of Ontario. We put mechanisms in place to try to reduce wait times and doctor shortages, but the need for health care services is far outpacing the money that's going in.

The McGuinty Liberals face the same problems and have decided to deal with it by raising taxes: the health care premium we were all told about in the last budget. Because of this, families are now paying as much as \$1,800 a year more in taxes, yet those I talk to say they still haven't seen any of the improvements they are paying for. I think that's also a big issue with our seniors. They're more concerned about the health care that isn't available than they are about retirement.

It's easy to understand that changes must be made to ensure that people receive proper medical care throughout their retirement years. Many seniors in Oxford have experienced at first hand longer waiting times and being without a family doctor. In fact, I was talking to one individual yesterday who wanted a doctor's appointment, and the earliest she could get an appointment was two and a half months from today. I think that's a much greater problem to the seniors in Oxford county than when they can or cannot go to work.

Many seniors in Oxford have experienced at first hand longer wait times, being without a family doctor, and the fact that they leave the hospital much quicker than they used to: shorter hospital stays. There will be increased pressures on the caregiver role and home care services. Not only are the effects of the doctor shortage being felt at the general practitioner level, but many are waiting, after they've met their general practitioner, for the specialists who have to perform the operations.

The other thing that the people I talked to yesterday were very concerned about was the issue of account-

ability and—I don't know whether it's the right word in this place—the issue of being believable. Of course, if you're not believable—that's why I questioned whether it was appropriate to say it in the House; if you're not believable, it's an inappropriate word to imply. It's the issue of integrity in people, that in fact people can believe what their people tell them.

I was a little concerned the other day. I met a good friend of mine who happens to sell used cars, and as I was talking to him for a few moments, he congratulated me and thanked me. I asked, "What did I do that you would be so thankful for?" He said, "The results of the latest survey have just come out, and it seems that the used car salesman has moved past the politician as a trustworthy occupation." He thanked me, of course, because that would put the politician—I hate to suggest it, Mr. Speaker. You would be one of those too, though I'm sure you are not a politician sitting in that chair. But he was so happy to say that politicians are now less respected than used car salesmen.

What's important is not so much where we are on the list but that the public is becoming very cynical, I think we would all agree, about what politicians tell them as to what they will and will not do for them. It becomes very important for all of us to raise that bar a little higher, that we don't make promises that we can't keep and that we can deliver the things we have promised to do.

Along with health care, that was one of the big issues we discussed yesterday, and it related to the things these same people heard two years ago when there was an election. They heard things about not raising taxes and providing more medical services, and of course that isn't what happened. Their taxes went up and they delisted chiropractic, eye care and the physiotherapy services that seniors in particular need.

They removed the vehicle tax credit that affects seniors' mobility. None of us in this House gave that much thought, but that was a great imposition on a lot of our seniors. We can talk about how we can let seniors work longer, but what about the things seniors need when they can no longer work? That was another one.

Another very big issue was the price of electricity. Oxford, you will know, has a large component of rural people. Hydro is supplied by Hydro One in the rural areas, and the cost of hydro has gone up dramatically. All the seniors remembered that both parties that were in the race—I shouldn't say "both." In my riding, there were seven names on the ballot. It wasn't what all the parties were saying, but the two main parties, the two that had the highest numbers, were pointing out that if they were elected, it wouldn't make any difference. Both parties agreed that the price of hydro would be locked until 2006. We were assured that our hydro bills would not go up. You will be aware that they have gone up dramatically in that time. That's not really living up to one's commitments. That's not really saying something and then doing it. I think that breeds cynicism in our population.



They repealed the education property tax credit, which was especially regressive for seniors on fixed incomes. Property tax is one of the big issues for seniors. If their income is not growing at the same speed that inflation is causing the cost of living to go up, it becomes very important that we keep the cost of accommodations down to where they can afford it. Our government had previously introduced the seniors' tax credit, which it was repealed by this government. It was going to provide an average of \$475 each year for more than 945,000 senior households—gone. That wasn't what was supposed to happen, but there it was again: more difficulties for our seniors living on a fixed income.

One other thing brought up was the issue that when the government was having problems with doctors, it came out that, as part of the agreement, doctors were asked to cut down on the medication they were prescribing to seniors to reduce the cost of the drug plan for the government. Of course, the doctors said if they did that, it would be hazardous to their health because they would be using different drugs than they were presently prescribing which were maybe not as effective. In fact, they were not over-prescribing, so that was not a way it could be reduced. People were very concerned that that was a negative for them, and again, it didn't look like the government cared about the seniors, who this bill refers to.

I think Ontarians deserve better. They deserve a government that will show leadership and hard work and someone who will be straightforward with them.

As I said, I support Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement, but I have to question this government's commitment to seniors and their well-being. Actions speak louder than words, and so far their actions have not been very positive.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for questions and comments.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I don't want to waste two minutes of my time to disagree with the member for Oxford, except to say that in approximately seven or eight minutes, I'll be speaking against the Tories and the Liberals on this issue, so please stay tuned. Come back around 4:20.

**Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham):** I'm glad to speak to Bill 211 because this is something very important. The member from Oxford talked about the sense of dignity and self-worth for our seniors, and I certainly agree.

I think this is particularly unacceptable in this day and age with respect to how seniors can contribute to our society and economy. In my riding of Markham, for example, we have a lot of high-tech companies. It certainly is true that how much a person can contribute does not necessarily depend on the physical strength and status of a person. Oftentimes, it really is the mental and intellectual capacity and strength that is even more important. So it obviously is discriminatory if we require a person to retire at the age of 65.

1610

I also want to comment on what this means to a lot of immigrants. Oftentimes they come into this country in their late 30s or early 40s and, believe me, they would still get the highest points on the immigration grid. But when they come into the country, they usually have to spend a few years in acculturation, and some of them have to spend a few years to get their foreign credentials recognized. Of course, our government is helping them in a big way to expedite the accreditation of foreign credentials.

For these immigrants to have the time to build up the experience in this province, for them to have the time to build up the pension that they need when they grow old, they need the flexibility to retire at the time that they feel is appropriate intellectually, in terms of their health and in terms of their financial status.

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I have just a few brief comments. I think it's critical that we recognize that choice is what we're talking about here. It's very, very important that people have that choice.

When we think of the senior population in Ontario now, we think of people who have been working, quite often, for a long number of years. Some of them may want to retire younger; some of them may want to keep going; some of them may find that they get a great amount of joy from their jobs and a lot of intrinsic value. Why should we here at Queen's Park tell that individual, "No, you're no good any more. You're going to have to retire now. Go off. Retire. Hit the rocking chair. Hit the front porch. You've got nothing more to contribute"? That's not the way to go.

Choice is what it's about. Seniors will have the ability to make the choice that's right for them. If they're ready to retire, they'll be able to retire. If they want to continue on, whether it be with their career, full-time, part-time, and they have a contribution to make, they should be allowed to do that.

One of the things we talk about sometimes in organizations is corporate knowledge, corporate memory. It's something that sometimes only the senior members of an organization can bring. I know that sometimes when organizations do have a cleaning of house or when a number of people reach a certain age and are forced to leave, they lose a lot of that corporate memory. The younger people coming up don't have the mentors that they need to bring them along, and the organization suffers as a result.

Our seniors have a great contribution to make. They've made a great contribution already. Why should we here at Queen's Park be dictating to them to tell them, "Your contribution ends because you turn 65"? It's not fair, it's discriminatory, and I'm glad we're ending that.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** There is a lot to be said here. I'm looking at Bill 211 here, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement. Basically, all the act does is it amends the Human Rights Code and certain other acts to end mandatory retirement. As was said earlier today, and as I



even said earlier today, it's a form of discrimination to say that you reach the age of 65 and you have to retire.

I was talking earlier about the situation that I recall when I was studying 19th century history in Europe. Bismarck had become the leader of the new country of Germany and he had said, "When you reach 65, you have to retire and we'll give you a pension." It's a rule that came into place because someone out in Germany, back in the 1870s, decided to do that.

**Mr. Marchese:** Bismarck, was it?

**Mr. Berardinetti:** His name was Bismarck, yes, the member from Trinity-Spadina reminds me. He basically decided on this rule. Here we are 135 or 130 years later deciding finally that we don't need this rule. It's a different era. What we had 120 or 130 years ago was a different life expectancy, a lifestyle, a different way of living our lives. People who are 70 years old and 60 years old are now considered much younger in age. Someone who was 70 back in 1870 was considered old. Someone who's 70 nowadays is not considered old. People are starting careers in their 50s, 60s and into their 70s and continuing on well beyond that.

I support this legislation. It's important that we send a signal out there as a government that we are not going to tell people to close their shops, leave their jobs or go home when they're 65. This is good legislation, and I support it.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for a response.

**Mr. Hardeman:** I want to thank the members from Trinity-Spadina, Scarborough Centre, Scarborough Southwest and Markham for their kind comments. I would just say that I totally agree with them, that the issue is really about choice and people having a right to choose.

The member from Scarborough Southwest mentioned—I really didn't know the history of where we came from and where we got this mandatory retirement at 65. I find it hard to believe that in today's society you could have had that debate and had that type of policy developed, because obviously it's discriminatory; that just because you get to a certain age—and I'm getting a lot closer to that than I really appreciate—you're not capable of doing something, you are substandard to what you were before.

I totally agree with them in saying that this is an issue of choice. I support 100% the government's initiative to eliminate mandatory retirement and in fact give all our citizens the choice as to what they want to do, whether they want to work.

Incidentally, we don't have mandatory work legislation. We don't tell people they have to work at a certain time. I don't think we should have legislation that says they cannot work because of their age.

I support this 100%. I thank members for their kind comments. This may be the only time in the past—I know it's been in the past two years, but this could be the only time in the next two years that I totally agree with the government's legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes, in further debate, the member from Trinity-Spadina.

**Mr. Marchese:** I want to welcome Ontario citizens to this parliamentary channel. It's 4:20 on the clock and we are on live. We're speaking on Bill 211, an act to end mandatory retirement.

I have to tell you that New Democrats oppose this bill. We are unanimous in our opposition to this bill, unanimous in our opposition to all of the Tories and all of the Liberals who, today and in the near future, will probably be supporting this bill. I hear the member from Oxford who's so delighted about the bill. The only problem with it, I suppose, is that you Liberals just haven't acted fast enough, but if they were in power, they would have done it sooner. Is that more or less the issue? Yeah.

I have to tell you, member from Oxford, people can work—and Gerry Phillips knows this—past age 65. They can. Nobody prevents you from working past age 65. No one. If you want to work, like some members in this place, past 65, you can. You are not prevented from doing so.

I'm not quite sure why we have this bill. People like my father worked past age 65. There are lots of people who work past age 65. Why we have this bill is of interest to me and of interest to many people in this place and presumably outside of this place.

What ever happened to freedom 55, Speaker? You remember those commercials. They were good. They had these wonderful scenes as this man or this woman talked about how beautiful it's going to be. Once you get to age 55, you get in the saddle and just "Ride 'em, cowboy," in the nice beautiful fields and just enjoy life. Freedom 55—and it wasn't long ago—whatever happened to that? Corporate people wanted us to aspire to retirement at age 55, so you could enjoy life. The idea was that when you have worked for so long, you should be able to, and can and could retire at age 65 to be able to enjoy the fruits of life and what life has to give. The fruits of life are often beyond the workplace.

Now I can see that for the Tories and Liberals the fruits of life are in work—work till you drop because it's the most beautiful thing you could be doing. I understand that Liberals and Tories enjoy seeing people work till they drop. God knows, we are living longer and we want them to be able to work as long as they can, because Tories and Liberals like the idea that people work till they drop. Freedom 55 no longer; it's passé. We no longer want people to enjoy themselves at age 55, because no, that was bad. It was a wrong cultural ethos to be part of. Whatever possessed those corporate individuals to advertise on television with those beautiful pictures of how sweet life is at age 55, plus one day after that? How wrong they were. Bring them back to the idea of the gloriousness of working past age 65 because we live longer.

1620

I have got to tell you that in my experience, the people I've known in the past couldn't wait for retirement—if only they could, but could not. The majority of people I



know work to age 65 because they have to, not because they want to. Why do they have to? Because what they earn is insufficient. It's about not having enough pecunia; that's what it's about. I wager with you, Speaker, that if the majority of workers were given decent wages or had a private pension and/or had a pension given to them by the federal government that was somewhat satisfactory, they would be retiring at 65 or earlier. I wager that with you, Speaker, or any other Liberal member here in this House. It's about not earning enough. If people work past 65, the majority of them work because they have to, not because work is glorious past age 65, because the majority of people know that you never know how much longer you're going to live.

You can abstractly say, as Liberals say, "Ah, people live longer"—in the abstract, yes; in the particular, some people don't last past age 65, and that is why the majority of human beings I know who work hard want to be able to retire at 65 if they can, or earlier if they could. The majority of them would love to be able to be with the grandchildren; would love to be able to visit the daughters or sons and play with the grandchildren. The majority of people would love to be able to volunteer in some non-profit agency if they could, and if they could retire, they would. It's all about not having the pecunia.

Instead of the Liberal government here today saying, "We are going to lobby the federal government to increase pensions in a way that people could retire at 65 and earlier," rather than that, they come here with this notion of choice. "We want to give people choice. What's wrong with choice? If people want to work, they can. If people don't want to work, they don't." It seems like a very nice formula. How could you be opposed to this simple, clean formula of people having choice? There's a greater political agenda at work here that I will speak to in a little while, but I want to make reference to a number of people in Ontario and Canada who work for so little they might have to work past age 65.

Hotel and motel workers: workers in Toronto earn \$27,000; the median wage is \$26,000. Child care services: workers in Toronto earn \$25,000; the median wage is \$25,350. Full service restaurants: workers in Toronto, \$53,700; the median wage is \$19,000. Nursing and residential care facilities: Toronto, \$27,000; median wage, \$30,000. Building services: workers in Toronto earn \$32,900; median wage, \$23,000. Semiconductor and electronic component manufacturing: workers in Toronto, \$12,000; median wage, \$29,250. Clothing manufacturing: workers in Toronto \$23,800; median wage, \$20,000. Business support services: workers in Toronto, \$20,700; median wage, \$25,350. Special food services: workers in Toronto \$12,500; median wage, \$24,375. Personal and laundry services: workers in Toronto \$40,500; the median wage, \$21,000. General merchandise stores: workers in Toronto \$47,000; median wage, \$19,500. One-third are part-time.

This is a long list of people who work in a whole lot of sectors in Ontario whose median wage is clearly, to me, inadequate to survive on in Toronto or beyond the bor-

ders of Toronto. These workers I've mentioned and many others I haven't will have to work past age 65 to be able to pay the bills, because they're not earning enough. That's what this is all about. It ought to be a discussion of, are people working? Are people earning a decent wage? Do they have a decent pension to be able to retire at age 65? The argument I've put forth is that the majority do not. We should be talking about that.

Instead, we have a few arguments from some Liberals saying, "Women come into the work field much later and therefore they need to work past age 65 to be able to accumulate enough money and/or to have an adequate pension." The pensions are inadequate, and women who work raising children work hard. Rather than women in this place and men in this place, Liberals and Tories, arguing that perhaps women who work in the home looking after children should have access to a pension of sorts, they present an argument here saying, "They take care of the children, and they start work later, so we need to have them have the choice to work past age 65."

That's not the argument you should be making. You should be supporting the fact that women work hard in the home, and are not paid for that work and there's no connection to any pension as a result of that hard work. That's the argument Liberals should be putting forth, not saying, "They work hard as mothers and then we want them to work harder, longer than ever, past age 65, till they drop." That's the argument you want to put forth and defend? It's certainly not the argument I want to support or could support. It's the wrong thing to do.

I'm telling you that what you are doing with this bill is gradually shifting the culture around a little bit to the point where, having done this, you will have federal governments start reflecting on having pensions move to age 70 as opposed to age 60, because we live longer and because you provincial Liberals have made it possible for people to work past age 65. Given that there's a law now that says you can work past age 65, and given that many will work past age 65 because they have to, federal governments will advance the argument that now, finally, we are ready to push the pensionable age to age 70, as Mulroney tried to do when he was in power, before 1993.

**1630**

I'm telling you, it won't be just Mulroney types who will bring forth the debate on pensionable age at age 70; it'll be Liberals, I guarantee. These Liberals might not be around, because they will either have retired or been retired by the electorate, but those who remain will know that both Liberals and Tories federally are eventually going to put forth a question of choice: "Don't you think perhaps we should move the pensionable age to 70?" "And why not? We live longer. What's wrong with that choice?" you will say. It'll be interesting to see how many Liberal backbenchers will be there in the front lines saying, "No, it was never meant for that. No, we never intended to have this kind of debate. No, it was never intended to change the culture such that we are contemplating the idea of moving the pensionable age to



70." They will say that foolishly, naively. But this is where that is leading to.

The majority of working people want to retire at an age when they have the strength, the will, the intellect, the peace of mind to be able to do other things such as not having to be afraid of the bills that have to be paid and not having to worry that you would love to be with your grandchildren but you can't afford it. The Liberal government is so happy that they made some minimal change provincially to increase the minimum wage, so happy with that they are that, in spite of the minimal change they have made to the minimum wage, the majority of people here in this country are earning an inadequate salary to survive decently.

I am telling you and those of you who are watching, the middle class is slowly diminishing and disappearing. We have, for the first time ever, a manufacturing base that is getting smaller and smaller. It was the manufacturing base and unionized sector that allowed people to have a middle-class income. We are losing that. We are exporting all of our manufacturing jobs to other parts of the world where they only have to pay a dollar or two a day. We can never compete with a dollar or two a day. But our manufacturing jobs are disappearing. The well-paying jobs are disappearing.

Oh, yes, all those poor immigrants coming to this country, all those immigrants coming here with incredible skills, academic skills better than most of the immigrants we used to have in the 1950s or 1960s in terms of academic degrees, they come here and are unable to find work in their field. Yet the federal Liberal government has a policy of bringing bright people with good degrees to this country; oh, are they ever so proud to bring in these immigrants. Then they bring them in and they say, "OK boys, you're out on your own. Good luck finding a decent job."

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** What about the women?

**Mr. Marchese:** Men and women immigrants, good luck with finding a decent job. Not once have I heard a Liberal in this place, minister or otherwise, attack the federal Liberal government that says, "We're bringing immigrants and, when they come, we have nothing to give them." "Oh, yes, you're a doctor. Oh, yes, we need doctors, but good luck finding a job." Oh, the Liberals are quite happy to say, "We are putting more foreign-trained doctors into the medical profession than did the Tories," but you can't argue that you're putting thousands there, no siree. When you say, "Oh, percentage-wise we've increased it by 100 %, no problemo." You go from 50 to 100, and you say, "Oh, my God, it's 100%." Or you go from 100 to 200, and you say, "Oh, my God, it's 100%." It's not a lot; don't kid yourself, and don't pat yourself on the back. We are bringing into this country cheap labour. Academics and well-trained professionals become cheap labour. They're the ones who are working double time and triple time trying to make ends meet to pay the rent and/or to pay for a house. They will be working past age 65, not because they want the choice,

but because they have to. You don't have too many Liberals saying, "We feel bad for them."

The minimum wage is simply insufficient. We worry about what business has to say, but we're not worried about those families that are earning minimum wage at \$7.15 an hour.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** It's going up to \$8.

**Mr. Marchese:** The Liberals behind me: "It's going to go to \$8." So proud they are. In two more years, it'll go up to \$8.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Marchese:** The NDP, to the Liberal member up there, Lorenzetti, who says, "What would you do?" our policy—

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** What did you do?

**Mr. Marchese:** What did we do? We increased the minimum wage, my friend, when we were in government, something the Tories refused to do for eight years when they got in. Now you come here proud of the few cents extra that you give them in an economy that's gotten more and more expensive.

We said minimum wage should be at \$8 an hour when it was at \$6.85, Lorenzetti, and they say, "Oh, it's going to go up to \$8 in two more years," and they say it with pride. Aren't we so proud that so many are hungry, so many are working poor, so many cannot afford the luxuries that MPPs, relatively speaking, have, the luxuries that wealthy people have.

Wealthy people have the choice to retire when they want. Wealthy people don't have a problemo retiring at 50 or 55 or 60 or 65 or even going on. They don't have any problemos with that. It's the working poor we are trying to protect here with this bill. It is they who deserve a decent wage and it is they who deserve a decent pension. That's what Liberals should be fighting for, at least those who pretend and claim to have a heart. That's what they should be fighting for, not the choice to work till they drop. That's not the bill they want.

I thank you, Speaker, and those Liberals listening to me, for the 20 minutes that I had.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for questions and comments.

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I just want to respond to my colleague from Trinity-Spadina. I always enjoy listening to him because he has such a dramatic way and such passion. It doesn't necessarily mean that he's right, but he delivers it well.

One of the things that he said in his inimitable style was, who's stopping anybody from working past 65; anybody can work past 65. He mentions in the abstract this, and in the real world this. In the abstract, he's absolutely right, but in the real world there are people who have jobs working for organizations that make it mandatory for them to retire at 65. Now, they can go out and get a job, maybe, after 65, but it would certainly be a lot easier for them to stay in the job they have where they obviously are making a worthwhile contribution and



they're of use to that company or that organization or whatever. To suggest that because someone has set this arbitrary number of 65, they must leave, is something that I don't think is fair and I don't think is equitable.

People can retire at any time. I have an employee who was a police officer. He retired at 52. There are other people who can retire even earlier than that because of the nature of their particular employment, where if the factor works out and they got into the job at 18, after 20 years they hit a factor that allows them to retire.

The whole issue is this: No one says that you must work past 65, no one says that you have to work a shorter period of time, but if you want to work and you're in a job where you are productive, where it is an essential part of your life because you've contributed so much of your time to that particular endeavour, you should have the right to continue to work as long as you are productive. And that is what this bill is about. It's about making sure that that freedom of choice is there.

1640

**Mr. O'Toole:** It has been said that the member from Trinity-Spadina is a very entertaining speaker. He certainly has a lot of validity in his arguments with respect to where they're coming from. I give him credit. All members would have a certain amount of sympathy with their arguments. I think if you just wrap it down into the two issues they're fighting for, they are the minimum wage issue—and there are probably arguments for and against almost all the policies derived from the NDP platform—and the issue of having a universal, mandatory pension for every worker and every small business person. If you look at the economy today, that's certainly an important concern in the broader debate on pensions themselves.

As has been said, many of the contracts that are entered into between employers and employee groups, be they unionized or non-unionized—most employers in the small business world would probably like to retain their employees, because it means less training, less expense, more reliability, dependability etc.

I think the ultimate choice here by the Human Rights Commissioner in his ruling was that there should be the right. It should not be discrimination based on age. But it would be very difficult for an employer to say arbitrarily that someone who is 65—and I know the Minister of Community Safety has just spoken. If it was mandatory that we retire, he wouldn't be here. I'd be close to that point in time myself.

I believe that people have the right, and I would stand in support of this bill. I'll be speaking shortly and my argument will be primarily that many people at certain points in their lives, depending on the kind of work they did, maybe didn't have a choice. There's meaning gained from work for many people, and that should not be diminished. But I think there are arguments to be made, and the member from Trinity-Spadina makes them very well.

**Mr. Flynn:** It certainly is a pleasure to join the debate. It's quite a simple debate when you boil it right down to

the essence of what we're being asked. The proposed Ending Mandatory Retirement Statue Law Amendment Act, 2005, would effectively, if passed, end mandatory retirement by amending the appropriate legislation to ensure that employees could not be forced to retire merely because they had reached a certain age.

We in the Liberal Party say that they should not be forced to retire. My understanding from the comments I've heard to date is that those in the Conservative Party agree that they should not be forced to retire. What I'm hearing from the New Democratic Party—the third party—is that they should be forced to retire. The human rights that would be extended to those people beyond the age of 65 who choose to work, the human rights they do not possess today that would be extended to them as a result of the passage of this legislation, should be extended, in the opinion of the Liberal Party and in the opinion of the Conservative Party.

The New Democratic Party's opposition to this is strange to me. This has been a party, I understand, that throughout its history—from people like Tommy Douglas, J.S. Woodsworth, Broadbent, Lewis; you can rhyme them all off—was all about extending human rights. For some reason, on this proposed piece of legislation, the New Democratic Party has decided, in essence, that some of the more elderly people in our society—who are still in great shape, who are still mentally alert, who love the work they do, who want to continue to do that work—should be treated differently. People in Quebec who are over 65 and have this right should retain that right, but in Ontario, according to the New Democrats, they should not get the same human rights as other people in the rest of Canada. That is simply wrong.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** As I sit here and listen to this debate tonight, it's really interesting. It almost makes no sense why we should debate it. The reasons that the member of the third party is giving really don't make any sense.

We talk about democracy and basic rights, which I think we all want to enjoy. We're privileged to live in a country where we can have those rights, yet when it comes to somebody wanting to be fulfilled in something they like doing, we're debating whether to make them stop or whether they can be forced to stop doing that.

Personally, I can relay that I often think and talk with some friends who are at home. If we leave things the way they are, what really happens on the day you're 64 years and 364 days old or when you hit the magic number of 65? What really happens? I hope that, for me, nothing drastically changes, that I can keep on doing what I enjoy doing, whether it's in this place or somewhere else in the workplace. Nobody should hold something over my head and say I have to do that because today I turned 65. It really doesn't make any sense.

Once again, I repeat to the layperson watching this on TV or here in the Legislature, it almost makes you wonder why we are spending time debating something that makes so much sense. If you want to talk about basic rights, well, if you want to work, if the potential is there



and the employer is willing to keep you there, why not? So I would urge that there shouldn't be any debate. We should just pass this bill and move on.

**The Acting Speaker:** Time for a response.

**Mr. Marchese:** I think there are three points, in response to my opponents.

**Mr. Duguid:** Colleagues.

**Mr. Marchese:** Opponents.

First of all, I want to say to the Minister of Community Safety that I like and respect him, but I want to make three points in relation to what people have said.

First, 65% of the people do not have a union in this country. That means the majority have no contract. That means the majority of them have no pension. Thirty-five percent have a union and a contract that says, at age 65, sayonara. In my view, it's a good thing. In my view, the majority of people who have a contract would love to retire earlier than age 65. That is a fact.

Second, you Liberals fail to grasp—because you're trying to hide under the simple formula of choice—that this cultural change is moving us and the federal government to say that what we need are pensions you can have not at age 65 but at age 70. This bill will allow the framework and the foundation for that to happen.

Third, the majority of people would love you Liberals to hear them say, "Give me a decent wage, and if I don't have a union, help me to have a pension." That's what they want. They don't want to say, "I want choice so that I can work past age 65, until I drop." They want you to give them a decent pension if they don't have one, and they want decent wages. For that, we should be improving the minimum wage. That's not what you're doing. I'm sorry.

**The Acting Speaker:** Time for further debate.

**Ms. Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** It's interesting, when you've been in the House for the number of years that I have, one of the aspects of debating a bill is looking at how every party or every side chooses a position. I heard some of my colleagues—I don't want to say "my opponents," but my colleagues—in the House suggest that the sky is somehow going to fall in because of this bill. What I want to do—oh, and by the way, I want to note that I'm sharing my time with, I believe, the member from Mississauga South.

I want to begin with what the essence of this bill is really about, in spite of the constant—and, as I said, it's a shame, because you get these very polarized perspectives instead of maybe a more objective view of both the positives and the negatives as we move forward in legislation. The essence of this bill is that it amends the definition of "age." The previous definition had the effect of permitting discrimination in employment because of age, including mandatory retirement where the age is 65.

1650

I want to share with the House that I've had a number of individuals come and see me over the last six years. In particular, there was a civil servant and a truck driver. I recall these two in particular because their cases were interesting. One worked in the court system. He was not

a justice; he just worked in the court system. They had some employment issues. They couldn't find enough people to do the specific job that he was doing. But because he was reaching 65, he had no choice but to retire at 65 because that, apparently, was the contractual agreement that was there. He was going to turn 65, there was nobody to fill the job he had to do, but there were also issues about not finding people to replace him. He said, "Can I not even get an extension? I love the job I do." He was more than capable, had no health issues and he wanted to stay on. No, he couldn't. So he didn't have a choice.

Then there was a truck driver. He was in great physical health, and he certainly didn't look 65 to me. There again, for whatever reason, it was imposed upon him that he could not do this job that he loved. He said, "This is discrimination. I want to have a choice."

These are real stories, the real people who came to me, before this legislation was even introduced, about the issue of not being able to work after they reached a certain age.

There are benefits to society in general if people want to choose to work beyond this retirement age that someone chose at some point in time in the past—and we've kept it there—because people with that kind of experience in the workplace have often developed great expertise in what they do. Instead of just having to go out the door at 65, they can provide the benefit of their experience to younger people who are coming in, so that there is a history of experience that can be passed on.

I know, and the Minister of Health Promotion certainly knows, that people are living longer and they are also healthier. Therefore, it's also about adapting to this increase of healthy years that we have ahead of us, even though we are beyond 65. I think that's of benefit to all of us.

There is another aspect that is creeping up on us: a shortage in our workforce. That is happening, so we're going to need that talent and that expertise from the aging population.

I had this wonderful experience, and I've talked about it with a number of my colleagues. I spent four days down in Wisconsin and had this wonderful training with some of my US colleagues in the Legislatures. One of the sessions, on communication, was held by Mel Hurtig. I met him in the hall before we had this session. He was an elderly gentleman. He looked to be at least in his late 70s to me. That's the age that I had pegged him at. These were gruelling sessions. His session started at 9 o'clock, finished at noon, and it was incredibly intense. He ran the whole session by himself with 34 legislators. He had so much vitality and so much to contribute to train us when it came to this topic of communication, but the astonishing part about the work he did, to me, was that I didn't—let's put it this way: After a while, I didn't even think about the fact that he seemed to be a little bit older than a normal presenter. I don't know what that means, but he was. He shared with us his age. He was 93 years old. I couldn't believe it because of the energy he provided in



this presentation of this whole session, the wealth of information that he provided to us from years and years of doing this job. He still travels the world today. Just that same morning he had flown in from some other part of the world. Again, he's 93 years old, and he works full-time doing this. He isn't doing it for the money; he does it because he loves it. He just loves what he does.

I think our legislation is very, very progressive because it says that all citizens, no matter what age, have the choice that they can work after they're 65.

I have to say that many people choose not to work after 65, and that's OK too. Nobody is saying you have to work after you're 65. We hear the phrase "freedom 65." People have different interpretations of what that means. But many people prepare for retirement. They prepare for a time of maybe more leisure, less work, but that's a choice. I think that's what this legislation is intended to do.

It concerns me sometimes when I hear arguments from the third party, just a few minutes ago, that are very, very much, in my opinion—I don't want to say "theatrical," but certainly are biased.

**Mr. Marchese:** Say it if you mean it.

**Ms. Di Cocco:** All right, I will. I do mean it. It is theatrical. And I say that because it doesn't deal with—certainly in everything we do there are positives, there are negatives, depending on individual circumstances. But the intent of the legislation is about allowing people, as I said, to work after 65 if they so choose. That's all it does. It's about not discriminating because someone has turned 65. Again, there are so many benefits. There are benefits to the individual who chooses to work after they're 65. There are benefits to society and the workplace because they provide a wealth and benefit of experience and talent that they can continue on.

I'm quite perplexed at the rhetoric of opposition that comes up, because I don't think it's real. I don't think they truly believe that this is bad legislation or poor legislation.

I am very pleased that the former Minister of Labour, Chris Bentley, brought this forward. Now, as you know, we have a new Minister of Labour, the Honourable Steve Peters. I'm very pleased to be part of a team that supports this kind of very progressive legislation that is going to provide choice for all the citizens of Ontario who want to work.

I also want to remind the member from the third party that when he talks about pensions—and I'm not quite sure what he's trying to get at—as if this legislation is somehow undermining people's pensions, that I didn't quite get what he was trying to say there.

I want to remind everybody in this House that we are a part of that class of legislators in Ontario who don't get pensions. We do not. This is something that's not very well-known out there, but we don't. I'm not complaining. I'm just suggesting that that is a fact.

1700

One of the things we have to do as we move forward in bringing forward good legislation is that we have to

have good, honest debate about what value this brings to Ontario.

I'm pleased to be able to support this legislation. I certainly know that my constituents who have come to see me over the last six years as their MPP have asked that they please be given the choice to work after 65. They felt it is discriminatory and they were considering bringing it before a tribunal to see whether or not it is discrimination because of age.

I want to thank the minister for bringing it forward. I'm certainly going to support it and I'm hoping that the third party will rethink their rhetoric. I'm not quite sure if they're supporting it or not. From the debate I heard tonight, I don't think they are supporting it, but maybe they're going to change their mind by the time we've finished the discussion.

**Mr. Tim Peterson (Mississauga South):** It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to this bill. Like some of the other members in this House, I have grey hair and will be facing that magic age of 65, and I think it's time that we rejig our mentality of talking about older people and their contribution to society. Much of our society is focused on youth. We can rebuild bodies, we can rebuild faces—

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** In this job, the people retire you.

**Mr. Peterson:** We hope the noisy members will actually put up enough effort to give us a bit of a challenge in that regard.

As we can rejig faces and rejig bodies, and as Hollywood is an omnipresent view of our world, many people have succumbed to the view that you cannot trust anybody over the age of 35.

I have been a part of many societies. I have done business in Japan where, unless you have grey hair, you're not taken seriously, not only for your contribution to family but for your contributions to society. With the grey hair, you are accredited with the wisdom and experience that comes with that. In a society like ours, focused on youth, we don't understand that easily. The same exists in China, where often the patriarch or the matriarch of the family is well into their 80s, and many, many leaders in China were well into their 80s as they led the country.

There are tremendous contributions made by older people in North America. We know of John Kenneth Galbraith, Hazel McCallion, Ronald Reagan and even Mr. Greenspan, who, almost approaching the age of 80, has had a dynamic effect on the economy of North America and the world. In my riding, I can speak of Dr. Boyd Upper, a man who is well over 70 who has made a great contribution to politics and to his local community and continually works very hard. Jack Luby and Dick Chataway are two other names who have meant a lot to their society. In terms of building Canada, one can think of the grey-haired power of Ted Rogers of the Murdoch group and of Jimmy Pattison. All these people—wouldn't it have been a shame if they were asked to retire?



Unlike the member from Trinity–Spadina, I know a lot of people who enjoy working and get a great satisfaction from it. In my lifetime, I have had the pleasure of doing many types of work. In my teens and early 20s, I did a lot of manual labour, and had the great satisfaction of putting in a 10- or 12-hour day and seeing what I could accomplish with just my body. I obviously moved on and got educated, moved on to more cerebral types of work. I enjoyed the satisfaction of setting objectives and working hard at them. The member from Trinity–Spadina doesn't seem to know any of those people who get enjoyment out of the journey. They all want to have the destination, which makes them idle, which prepares them for doing nothing, because it seems there's no satisfaction for them in how they got there, only in that they prepared themselves for old age, to do nothing, to sit idle, to not benefit society.

As we build our society, one of the great tenets of our government is that we provide excellent health care. We are extending the useful life of people's bodies by banning smoking. How many of us have seen people wheezing from emphysema, knowing that they are in great agony? If those lives are extended, why can they not contribute? Why can they not help as they would like to? We have anti-cholesterol medicine for those of us who have abused our bodies and have not lived a proper lifestyle which, again, prevents all kinds of internal diseases and heart attacks. We are allowed to live longer. Why? To do nothing? That would not be my choice.

For many of us, the expectation, "Let's retire when we're 50. Let's retire when we're 60. Let's do nothing," comes out of the 19th century. It comes out of the time when there were no antibiotics, no penicillin, no insulin for diabetes; when there were no hip replacements, knee replacements or microsurgery for backs, which allow people to do everything they want to, including working to a later age.

As we face the future in our society, we face the ability to rejig our views of older people. I think today of friends of mine who do face serious chronic pain and are blessed with having a pump where they can inject themselves on a daily basis so that they can continue to function and do the things they want.

Many of the expectations of what we are doing today, I would like to repeat, are framed by the great Hollywood society, the Hollywood society that focuses only on youth, on youthful bodies, on great sexual expectations—and that can be rebuilt with plastic, not the bodies and not the lives that we face and we enjoy.

I very much support grey power. I very much support the wonderful activities of people who are building our society and making a tremendous difference as they find the journey is more important than the end result, the end result being straight idleness and lack of activity. I welcome in my daily exercise at this job the advice of people who have gone before me, the advice of people with more experience than myself. In most societies that are successful, that is a welcome and appreciated part of society. I suggest that that will be a major improvement

for the society of Canada, for its economic wealth and for its cultural wealth.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for questions and comments. The Chair once again recognizes the member from Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I did pay considerable attention to the member for Sarnia–Lambton, and I'll make a comment. The member for Mississauga South spent a fair amount of time talking about relieving pain and how various drugs can do that to make you effective. That's a whole other discussion.

I think what's important here is that she did admit, and I give her credit for that—there's actually in the future, if you're looking at any of the demographic or economic trends, an aging workforce, and as such, at some point in time, you can examine the productivity levels and all these various things. In manufacturing and the sectors where people's bodies can only take so much time on the end of a piece of heavy equipment, there will be a shortage of workers—in certain sectors, absolutely as forecast, no question. I'm saying to you that in certain other roles there is no shortage.

People are living longer, and I'll have more to say on that. From Stats Canada, the life expectancy has gone from 68 to about 75 for men, maybe even higher for women. People have got this idea of "freedom 55" in their mind; they want to retire. I think the point has been made, too, that people at the end of the day really want choice, and it's an individual thing. That's what this is doing.

It's really doing quite the opposite of what Mr. Marchese wants. Mr. Marchese wants everyone to be locked into kind of a unionized framework where they can discriminate and say, "You're 65. Sorry, our contract plan doesn't suit you. You've got to leave now." But the person can go and seek other meaningful work, if that's their choice.

1710

At the end of the day, John Tory's and our position on this is that we are in favour of choice, we are in agreement with the human rights decision on discrimination based on age. What's out of sync here, as it turns out, is the argument that Mr. Marchese and others are making, that, really, the unions themselves are discriminating. I don't want to go down that road, but they are providing other kinds of voices for workers. But it's a pleasure.

**Mr. Marchese:** In response to the two Liberal members and what they said: 65% of the people in Canada and Ontario do not have a union, have no contract with an employer and therefore have no pension. What do workers want? They want a pension. The majority of them do not have a pension. Why don't you talk about how we discriminate against so many workers who do not have a pension? How come that does not figure into the debate? Why don't you introduce a bill that says, "We will end discrimination against workers who do not have a pension"? Then we could support you. But to stand here and say, "Ah, we want them to work until they



drop past age 65": I'm sorry; that's not the kind of thing workers are talking about.

The Liberals, who take such great pride in saying, "We've increased the minimum wage to \$7.15"—

*Applause.*

**Mr. Marchese:**—"so people can live with dignity earning 18,000, 19,000, 20,000 bucks." Liberals call that dignity and they applaud themselves. When you talk about how you've increased the minimum wage so they can earn now, with dignity, \$17,000, \$18,000, \$19,000 a year, how can you applaud yourselves for that? Fix that. That's dignity; that's an end to discrimination against working men and women. Fix the fact that they don't have a pension. That would end discrimination against men and women. Talk about that, and then you can get New Democrats to support you. But this? Please.

Our leader is going to speak in about—oh, no, we have a Tory speaking next—a half-hour. In about a half-hour, our leader will be speaking to enhance our arguments.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** It gives me great pride to speak to Bill 211, the ending mandatory retirement bill. It is the right thing to do: ending ageism, ending discrimination. We have to stop.

Many members of our society feel that, come age 65, people should just stop in their tracks and that's it; they shouldn't be able to pursue many of the jobs that they have done for many years and love to do. Many jobs are vocational, things that people love getting up in the morning to do. I've met people from all sorts of different trades and professions, carpenters who love their trade, who don't want to stop doing it at age 65. We shouldn't stop them from doing it. They should be able to continue with that trade until the day they themselves, by their choice, decide they want to stop. I have met politicians, athletes, people in the medical profession, doctors who have wanted to continue doing what they love to do, helping people with their skills and knowledge, and providing that service.

Many times, people go through many different career changes. As today's society says, you change careers every seven or eight years. As those careers change, you may be picking up a new career at age 57 or 64. You want to continue with that career; it's something that you're inspired by and it's a new challenge. We don't want to stop people from being inspired and continuing to be able to provide all of us with their great skills.

This is a bill that is long overdue, and I'm glad that it's coming forward now.

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I want to speak in favour of ending mandatory retirement, because I believe it's a fair and balanced way that would not undermine existing rights and benefits. The NDP, in particular, must understand that this legislation is not forcing individuals not to stop. If they choose to stop working at the age of 65, they can certainly do that. What this legislation will do is allow people to continue working if they choose to.

My constituency has received a number of calls in support of making those changes. Many people feel they

can contribute to the system, even after the age of 65. One of my colleagues made some reference earlier. If you look at a number of politicians—which we are—they tend to be over the age of 65. Nobody seems to have a problem having a Prime Minister who is over 65 or a leader of a party over 65. So why should we block individuals who want to continue working and being productive?

On a personal note, my little girl is only five years old now, and I am over 50. This means that when I am 65, my little girl will be 20 years old and, I suspect, will still be going to school. Does it mean I shouldn't be able to continue working so that she will be able to continue her studies in case there is a need for her to receive financial assistance from me? It just doesn't make sense. If any of us wish to continue to work, that option should be available. We should not be discriminated against because we reach that age, because at the end of the day, experience is very important. It does not take away opportunity for young people, in my opinion, and therefore it should be supported.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for a reply.

**Ms. Di Cocco:** I want to thank the members from Mississauga South and, of course, Durham, Trinity-Spadina, Mississauga East and Thornhill for their input.

I heard the member from Trinity-Spadina trying to say that this bill is somehow about having people work until they drop. That misconstrues totally the intent of this bill. This bill is only about amending a discriminatory definition of "age" in such a way that it actually does not permit that discrimination in employment because of age and does not discriminate after they're 65.

As I said, I listened to the argument, I listened to the debate, and when I hear that kind of language, trying to suggest, "Well, you guys just want to make them work until they drop"—that has nothing to do with this bill. It's a choice. It's a choice people have. Nobody is saying that people are forced to work until they're 65. That totally misconstrues the intent of this bill. This bill is about having the choice, and whoever doesn't want to work until they're 65 and chooses at age 55 or 60 or 62, whatever, to retire and not work: absolutely. But those people who care and who want to, who choose to work after they're 65—whether it's their circumstances, whether it's because they love their job, whatever the reason—now have the choice. That's what this bill is about.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. O'Toole:** It's my privilege to speak on behalf of the constituents in the riding of Durham on Bill 211. I think it's always important to go back to the beginning of the story. In the very brief time—I hope I have 60 minutes, but I'm not sure of that; no, it's only 20 minutes.

1720

Here's the starting point: Some of you would probably know that Keith Norton issued a report—he was the human rights commissioner of Ontario—in 2001. In the report, he called for an end to mandatory retirement. I can quote an article that was printed in the media. The commission also called for a change in the Ontario



Human Rights Code, defining the definition of "age" to end mandatory retirement. Once in place, a person's age could no longer be used to determine when they are to retire from the workforce. That's the background, and it's important to understand that that initiative was in 2001, and 2005 is where we are now.

The next point in history was that our government, under Premier Harris at the time, had Bill 68, which was the first instalment. That bill was introduced, and it died because of the election. I think that then, in 2003, there was a general consensus that it was the right kind of decision.

The discussion has been going on, and here we are a couple of years later, in 2005, and we have the bill we're debating here before us, Bill 211.

What the bill does actually is a couple of important things. I think it's important because we're kind of in agreement on this thing, but we're looking at its implementation and implications. "Sections 2 to 6 of the bill amend or repeal provisions of other acts that require persons to retire at a certain age." Arguments will be made that the only place where it's mandatory is within the contracts under certain sections under the employment standards or codes under collective bargaining.

The point there is probably well established. If you look at the public sector, in the case of municipal workers, for instance, or police and fire, those workforces, because of the demands of the occupation, have over time negotiated the provision of a certain factor of age and experience. Some of them are 70, some of them 75, some of them 80. Let's say that you start when you're 25, you work for 25 years—that's a factor of 75. If you're a firefighter at 25 years of age and you work for 25 years, you're then 50 and that's a 75 factor. Can you imagine people retiring at 50? They're not going to retire—nor should they. They draw their pension and they're able to do things that perhaps their body is more suited to do or they choose to do. That's what this question is about.

My personal view is that's where the contention begins. If the pension itself then becomes the issue, if the pension itself is indexed and if you look at the contribution schemes within most plans, this is where the problem emerges. Many plans in certain sectors have what they call an aging-out factor. What that means is that they take age and time on the job to come up with a factor. As I said, some of them are 70 or 75 or 80—many of them are 90 factors. Let's do the math with the 90 factor. You can do that math. You find people retiring much before the age of 60.

Those pension plans were all predicated, as we saw under the revisions to the Canada pension plan—they are actuarially incorrect. Most of the fundamental assumptions have been proved to be wrong actuarially, because the aging population we all talk about—early diagnosis, detection and treatment. Life expectancy has changed from an average of 68 to probably 70 or 75. If the contribution was predicated on your deceasing at 68 and you're going to live an extra 10 years, those plans, as we saw with the Canada pension plan—what they did was

they augmented the CPP contributions. The reason they did that was that those plans are virtually bankrupt. I don't want to scare anyone, but I think what was said earlier in some of the contrary arguments, the NDP arguments—this is really fundamentally all about pensions.

I am not saying this from just a reckless commentary here. I'm going to cite an article from the *Toronto Star*, a very Liberally oriented media conduit of Liberal public policy. That article is dated June 26, 2005. It's fairly current. It's entitled, "Thumbs Up for Working Seniors: Tony Keller Says Younger Generation"—listen now; this is very important—"Simply Cannot Afford to Support Retired Baby Boomers."

If you read that article, there are several important factors here that actuaries and others who do all of these extremely complex calculations could help you through. Here I'm going to quote:

"But the most compelling argument against mandatory retirement is an economic one. We younger people need you older people to stay productive, at least for a few more years. We can't afford to support all of you. We're going to need a little help.

"The good news is that Canadians are living longer and retiring earlier. That's also the bad news. Back in the 1960s, there were six workers for each retiree."

Now, think about this. This is the typical pyramid theory. The pyramid theory, most futurists will say, has reversed itself. This article goes on to say, "Today"—this is 2005—"there are four workers per retiree." The point is that for each retiree, there used to be six people paying into the plan. Today, for each retired person, there are four people contributing to the plan—the pyramid. "In 2030, the ratio will be only 2:1." For every retired person, there will only be two of you young people supporting them. That's this whole article.

If you apply this mandatory—and that's been denied by Liberal governments, by Paul Martin. He's been finance minister; he's a very clever man. It's been denied by many, specifically in this debate here, that the Liberals have a secondary agenda. I put to you, I cannot trust anything Dalton says—not in a personal way, but if I look at his public policy—"I'm not going to raise your taxes"—this is another one to be suspicious of, not for the function that the argument is being made here; just be honest with the people of Ontario for a change.

This article goes on: "In the 1960s, life expectancy for a Canadian male was 68 years and the median retirement age was 65." In other words, they retired for three years. You can figure out the actuary sitting down: retired at 65, three years, they paid in for 30 years, bingo, there's enough money in the bucket to pay for themselves in their little fund, provided they didn't invest in Nortel or something.

"Today, the average male can expect to live almost a decade longer, to 77," and I hope I do and I hope all of the people do, but that's the point. It used to be you retire at 65 and die at 68. Now it's changed. Now it's freedom 55. Imagine a fireman retiring at 55; he's going to be retired longer than he lived in his working world.



**Mr. Hampton:** Good for him.

**Mr. O'Toole:** And that's good. Nothing wrong. I'm only pointing out—the maze that I'm leading you through here—that you can't retire longer than you worked. Somebody else has got to put the money in the pot, and it's young people. I'm looking at the pages now. I'm thinking of my five children who will all have to work so my wife and I can retire. No, no. A lot of people don't have any children, so do you know what they're going to do? They're going to bring new Canadians in to work. That's why you've got to grow the population, grow the economy, so there are more people paying than collecting. It's that simple. It's not complicated.

If I look at this in an isolated case, Bill 211—it's quite a small bill; I will be supporting it. I have, however, my suspicions. For the debate, it's important to look at Bill 206. How strange. Bill 206 is An Act to revise the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System Act, OMERS. These aren't related. Almost all public sector pensions come under OMERS. The issue is, while they're not changing OMERS, they're changing the governance of OMERS. I think the provincial government, as the employer of record, has a certain amount of pension liability going forward. Is pension liability a big issue? You bet it is. It is the issue of the decade. Most people under 40 don't worry about it too much.

1730

The pension issue is the single most important issue today. And I'm going to tell you, because I have read this and I have examined it, why Air Canada is in huge trouble. It's the pension liability. Why is Stelco having such trouble divesting itself, and in protection? It's the pension liability. The auto sector generally, and I'm not trying to alarm anyone—this would include the Big Three, possibly the big four. Their pension plans are not fully funded. In fact, the pension liability in the auto sector is all captured under one definition called the legacy employers. Older employers like Stelco, Ford and General Motors have an aging workforce and contracts that encourage people to retire younger, while at the same time they're downsizing their workforce through automation, as we've seen in the latest CAW contracts. That goes back to my first point that there are actually going to be fewer people working to pay for the many who have retired early and who are living until they are 80. That's why these pension funds, in real dollars, don't have an actuarial deficit; they have an estimated forecast to project a deficit in the ability to fund these pension plans going forward.

How does that tie in to Bill 206? The main issue around Bill 206, which we are not discussing, is the OMERS pension plan revisions—very subtle. There are two points. There are two particular groups that want to separate themselves from the OMERS group. Who are they? Police and fire. They want out of OMERS because they want to continue, as they probably should, to retire earlier with a 70, 75 or 80 factor, which means they're 50, 52 or 53 years of age when they retire. It's like any bank account, which is what a pension really is. In their

case, it's a defined benefit plan, meaning that when they make it up to sergeant or captain, whatever the rank is, for their last five years they're going to be at the very highest rank, and the pension plan is calculated on their best five years of income. If you look at it actuarially, the first 20 years they were just climbing ladders or doing traffic violations and the work that younger, less senior people would do. They would do more office and administrative functions as they move up the ladder to sergeant or captain or whatever, and would actually be making probably 25% more. But for the first 15 years of employment, they probably didn't make what they'll be entitled to make as a pension. And I'm not against that; these are negotiated collective agreements. But if I look at this bill, that's substantively one of the issues they're dealing with.

Look at a couple of the sections in the bill. It says: "Sections 9 to 15 set out restrictions on the terms and conditions of the OMERS pension plans. Every OMERS pension plan must be a defined benefit plan." What's a defined benefit plan? A defined benefit plan says you're going to get so much, times the number of years of service, times your annualized salary. Let's say you get 3%, times 25 years. That means you get 75% of your highest salary. That's your pension for life. Often they are indexed, meaning, if you were making—these aren't the actual numbers, but for simple math—\$100,000 for your last five years because you were the chief; you're making \$75,000 as a pension. It could possibly be indexed, and possibly you'd get a year's severance—probably one month for every year of service as a severance.

These are the concerns that are raised in the number of articles I'm raising. I'm only bringing them to the attention of the House because I believe that Bill 211 is really sending a signal that retirement may not be an option for the future.

How does it affect your Canada pension? There are provisions under the Income Tax Act where if you have a pension and you have income, the pensionable income will actually be clawed back from your Canada pension. That's just starting. It's called a clawback provision under the Income Tax Act. I'm quite concerned, as I'm reaching that age.

As has been said before, there was an article in the Economist or one of those magazines talking about the aging workforce and the only way that Canada—in fact, Pierre Pettigrew said it in a speech that was made last week in Toronto at a big summit. I'm not quoting directly; I'm just going from a newspaper report, because I did not attend the conference. He said they are going to have to have a lot more immigration to bring in people to do the various tasks that have to be done so that we can still keep growing the base of employment, which implies that you've got to expand your economy. If the economy goes flat, we're all in trouble—all of us. No independence here at all.

How do I draw a conclusion on this? First of all, individuals need and want the right. The other part of this is some certainty going forward in any pension, whether



it's Canada pension or pension entitlements under the Pension Benefits Act. But then you turn immediately to the growing and developing entrepreneurial sector of the economy. These innovators in our economy are self-employed. They're consultants. They often may have one or two people in clerical functions, marketing functions or contract people.

Employment relationships are changing. People aren't going to be like me and others who work for a company for 30 years and then retire. That's finished. We're now in an era where you're going to have multiple careers in your life. Most young people are challenged and enthused by that; that's good. The pension part of it is going to become a pension plan which you create yourself through RSPs. The pension plans of the future will probably be defined contribution plans, not defined benefit plans. Defined benefit plans, as I said, are calculated by the factor of years of service times your salary. A defined contribution plan says that if I'm with an employer for four years, they give me their 10%, I give them my 10%, we put it in a fund and we hope the fund does OK, but nobody has a liability going forward. That's a very difficult pill to swallow, and it's quite intimidating for people whose future isn't guaranteed by a collective agreement or any other long-term commitment from an employer.

This legislation cannot be looked at in isolation. It's an admission, right from the Prime Minister down, that the people who have experienced a good quality of life—in the future, benefits, entitlements and indexation will all be predicated on having a healthy, strong economy, in the auto sector, the resource sector. If you don't have a manufacturing and resource sector, the actual job and wealth creators, our public sector and its important services will be at risk.

I leave you with the thought that Bill 211 is in response to the report issued by Human Rights Commissioner Keith Norton. Our government tried to put it through. John Tory and our caucus will be supporting the legislation. But I just put on the record a few of the concerns I have going forward that we need to have a strong and growing economy to support any calculation that will benefit persons who aren't actually still in the economy. If you've been in contract work all your life, I would strongly recommend that you work toward what I'd call a self-directed retirement plan, because there are very few legacy companies left. I put to you that in 10 years they will all be merged, subordinated or integrated, and any of the senior companies that exist today will be quite different 10 years from now.

We'll be supporting this plan. The young people of the future have every right to ask questions of legislators so they don't end up paying the bill for agreements made by governments that they had little say in.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Hampton:** I listened to the comments of my colleague from the Conservative caucus, and I want to give him credit because he is focusing on the issue of pensions. He realizes that this is not what the government

tries to dress this bill up as, about individual choice; he recognizes that there are serious issues here about pensions, and that this government, the McGuinty government, is trying to slide through legislation which will have a very serious impact on pensions, without having a debate or discussion in this place about pensions. He knows that this really is an attempt to finesse, slide by, avoid having a discussion about pensions, because a discussion about pensions would draw a lot of public interest.

People want to know where their pension dollars are invested. People want to know what is happening with what is, in effect, their deferred income. Other people want to know why pension legislation in this province is so weak. Other people want to know why pension regulation in this province is so weak. So I give the member credit. He correctly identifies that this is not just some philosophical notion about individual choice; this legislation is intimately tied to the future of people's income security, people's pensions, how people will make out in retirement in this province. But the government doesn't want to have that debate about pensions, so they try to disguise the whole discussion as about individual choice, about whether you work or retire. Nonsense. This is directly connected to pensions.

1740

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I appreciate the opportunity to put on the record a couple of comments that I've received from my riding itself. I ended up in a battle for some supply teachers and some firefighters who were given their notice and told, "You're 65; you're gone." Absolutely not one word of their ability—nothing. As a matter of fact, they showed me their record of their performances. Their performance appraisals were exceptional, including the fire department. The city had indicated that this guy was designated as one of the most impressive firefighters that they've seen, at the age of 64. As soon as he turned 65, he wasn't able to do his job any more because he was 65.

What I find interesting is that the member from Durham gave us some good advice in terms of what we need to look for in terms of future planning, and it dovetails nicely into what the member from Kenora—Rainy River, the leader of the third party, is saying about pension reform. What we're talking about here—and let's make it clear—is that the minute you turn 65, in some cases you are out to pasture. Shameful. In my dealings with some of the people and trying to get an answer for them, they started to come up with five different excuses why they couldn't accommodate this 65-year-old. First it was, "Well, it's a WSIB situation. Oh, wait a minute. No, it's not that; it's a benefits issue. No, it's not that. Oh, wait a minute; it's because the law says at 65 I can put him out to pasture." I challenge everybody who turns 65 to have your employer tell you precisely, "What is the purpose for me being let go?" That's what this legislation is doing: removing that very flimsy excuse that as soon as you turn 65, you're no longer a contributing member



of our society. We have to stop that, and I appreciate the opportunity to say that.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** I really enjoy listening to my friend Mr. O'Toole, who was formerly employed by General Motors. As I understand it, he doesn't have the same problem as many of the MPPs do here. He's the benefactor of a pension. So notwithstanding my objections with regard to what has happened in the past—

**Mr. Hampton:** And continues to be a problem.

**Mr. Sterling:** —and continues to be a problem—I think that while this legislation appears, on the face of it, to be very simple in terms of giving an individual the choice to continue working once he or she reaches 65, the problem is more complicated than that, and notwithstanding that, you face this issue when an individual becomes 65 and he or she is told they must leave the workplace: There's a problem in terms of explaining and dealing with the employer and the employee, and whether or not the capability they had when they were 55 is the same when they are 65. How do you deal with those very humane issues when you don't have any limitation on the up side?

I'm 63 years of age now, and I know nobody in this place believes that, but notwithstanding that, I don't believe I have the same energy I had when I was 53. Therefore, I can now do only twice as much as a Liberal can do, as opposed to four times before.

Notwithstanding that this is good legislation, there are some things we should think about as we go forward.

**Mr. Leal:** I listened very carefully to the comments from my good friend the member from Durham. I know he had a very distinguished career with General Motors, both here in Ontario, and I believe also perhaps in the province of Quebec, where he was a senior manager.

He talked about our growing economy. I just want to get on the record that yesterday, RBC released a new projection for Ontario. It said, "Ontario's economy is expected to grow 2.4% in 2005 and 3.1% in 2006." So we can look forward to a growing economy in Ontario.

For me, in a community where I have both a community college and a university, there are a number of females who, because they went through child-bearing years and other activities, didn't come into the workforce—or re-enter the workforce, I should say—until they were perhaps in their 40s. This legislation will give them an opportunity to work beyond age 65, particularly in those two areas, in the community colleges and universities, where they want to have the opportunity to share that expertise they have acquired over a great many years.

For other people, if they want an opportunity, if they feel able and can continue to make a contribution, to stay with their employer beyond age 65, I certainly believe they should be given that opportunity. A number of human rights commissioners across the province have dealt with this issue. It is a question of eliminating discrimination and of people looking at choice. I think it's an opportunity to give those individuals other opportunities to

continue working, and I think, as a society, that's what we should be all about.

I'm in full support of this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Member from Durham in response.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I thank those members who commented. I want to make sure I put on the record that last night, and again tonight, I will be attending Minister Colle's celebration of volunteers. There were over 240 volunteers last night in Oshawa, and tonight at Sikorsky Hall, there will be an excess of that; it's a larger hall. The respect and how it ties to this is that these people who choose to do something different at a certain age in their life—I find that volunteers for the most part are, what some would say, as the member from Brant said, just terminated. They are volunteers who make our communities work.

I want to pay respect: Jim Richards was given the volunteer service award at the end of the ceremony. He's a great guy; in fact, I worked with him at General Motors; he lives in Orono. He has been reborn in the whole issue of the Second Marsh and environmental and trail systems, and I send my congratulations to Jim, as I did last night. Tonight there will be others I would recognize.

The second part of this: I did a small bit of consultation on pensions when I was in the Ministry of Finance, and one of them was meeting with U of T professors. These are the tenured professors who are very concerned—think of the valuable contributions of these academics. I think, personally, of a very good constituent of mine, Professor John Traill, in archaeology at the University of Toronto, who is well published, a wonderful contributor to the academic world and to the scholarly world. These people are going to be forced to retire. It's simply not fair.

I'll be supporting the legislation. I will be watching closely the other legislation that affects entitlements to pensions, and I look forward to other comments on Bill 211.

1750

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Hampton:** I have only a few minutes remaining, but I do want to make a few comments about what the government has presented here in terms of their legislation and what I think it means.

As I said in my brief comments earlier, this is not an uncomplicated issue, and I want to thank the member for Durham for getting into the issue of pensions. The government would have people believe that this is all just a matter of simple, uncomplicated, individual choice. They'd even have people believe that if you're an older worker, all you have to do is indicate it's your choice to continue working and the matter is over. It's not like that in the world of work. The employer has choice as well, and the employer can come back and say, basically, "We don't want you around." The employer can then move, through legal processes, to say, "We're retiring you."

For the government to say, "This is all about individual choice, and if you choose to continue working, you'll be able to continue to have your job," is just not true. In fact, there are many places of employment in this province where employers—one of the reasons they support mandatory retirement is so they don't have to go through the painful process of saying to some of their employees, "We're going to retire you. We don't think you can do the job any more." That's painful. But for the McGuinty government to go around the province and say, "This is just a matter of your individual choice," is just not true. The labour arbitration reports of this province and the labour arbitration reports of other provinces are replete with all kinds of cases that exemplify that this is not just a simple matter of individual choice.

Secondly, the government has tried to avoid, to an extreme degree, any discussion of pensions and pension legislation. Yet it is very clear that this legislation will have a very direct and very dramatic effect upon pension legislation, upon pension calculations and upon the capacity or the ability of people to receive a pension in the future. I can tell you right now, and I think the member for Durham led into this somewhat, that financial institutions that deal with pensions will be looking at this legislation and they will start changing some of their actuarial estimates. They will be looking at issues of what greater contributions will be required or what changes will be necessary in terms of legislation which directly affects retirement age. This will have a direct effect upon collective agreements and it will have a direct effect upon collective bargaining going into the future.

Let me say that I expect it will not be too far in the future, based upon this legislation, that federally we'll see someone stand up and say, "We have to amend the Canada pension plan in terms of when someone can receive a Canada pension or a retirement pension."

For the government to say, "This is just a matter of simple, individual choice," is not being honest with people in this province. It will have a very direct, a very dramatic effect on people's retirement incomes and on the capacity of people to support themselves in retirement. It will have a very direct effect on collective bargaining in the province. It will have a very direct impact on people's terms of employment in the province—on all of those things.

What I wish is that the McGuinty government would just be honest about that, because my fear is that people are going to wake up four or five years from now and suddenly discover that the income security they were depending on in retirement, that capacity to retire early—financial institutions and insurance firms are going to be saying to you, "Sorry, that option's not on the table any more. Retirement age has changed in Ontario. Retirement legislation has changed in Ontario. As a result, the pension plan has changed. As a result, the possibility to retire earlier has changed. As a result, the level of the pension you can expect has changed." All of those are potential, real repercussions out of this legislation.

That's what I think we ought to be talking about. I think we ought to be talking about the security of people's income in retirement, the prospects of people's income in retirement. That's what I think the real debate ought to be about, because my sense, having been out there and having talked to lots of people, is that the vast majority of people in this province are not interested in working longer. You may try to dress that up as, "Oh, that's a matter of individual choice," to finesse that issue, but the majority of people are not interested in working longer. The majority of people are in fact interested in retiring earlier if they can, so that they can enjoy and do some of the things they may never have had the opportunity to do in their working life. Commensurate with that desire to retire earlier, they want to have a retirement income that will allow them to retire. They want to have some income security. Those are the issues that I suspect really matter to people.

This government isn't interested in debating that. This government isn't interested in having that public discussion. This government wants to dress it all up as, "Oh, this is just a matter of individual choice," and try to avoid all those issues. That is wrong, and that's going to come back to bite this government in the not-to-distant future.

Seeing it is 6 of the clock, and knowing you want to go home, Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. next Monday, October 31.

*The House adjourned at 1758.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement t	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick</b> (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior– Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David</b> (L) Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George</b> (L) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim</b> (L) Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Toronto–Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L) Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Parkdale–High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard</b> (L) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Whitby–Ajax	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra</b> (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight</b> (L) Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte</b> (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph</b> (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Sarnia–Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Vacant
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)		
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V.</b> (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse		
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry</b> (L) Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J.</b> (L) Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L) Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Jeudi 27 octobre 2005

AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC  
ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS

Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi sur  
l'aménagement des voies publiques  
et des transports en commun (route  
commémorative Hastings and  
Prince Edward Regiment),  
projet de loi 5, *M. Parsons*  
Adoptée ..... 491

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi  
sur la négociation collective  
dans les collèges, projet de loi 13,  
*M. Marchese*  
Adoptée ..... 494

Loi de 2005 sur l'accès à la justice,  
projet de loi 14, *M. Bryant*  
Adoptée ..... 494

DEUXIÈME LECTURE

Loi de 2005 modifiant des lois  
pour éliminer la retraite  
obligatoire, projet de loi 211,  
*M. Peters*  
M. McNeely ..... 512  
Débat présumé ajourné..... 528

# CONTENTS

Thursday 27 October 2005

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

<b>Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Amendment Act (Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway), 2005, Bill 5, Mr. Parsons</b>	
Mr. Parsons.....	475, 482
Mr. Yakabuski.....	476
Mr. Prue.....	477
Mr. Rinaldi.....	478
Ms. Scott.....	479
Ms. Churley.....	480
Mr. Leal.....	481
Mr. Wilkinson.....	481
Agreed to.....	491
<b>Strong neighbourhoods strategy</b>	
Ms. Churley.....	482, 489
Mr. Berardinetti.....	484
Ms. Scott.....	485
Mr. Prue.....	486
Mr. Qaadri.....	487
Mr. Klees.....	488
Mr. Zimmer.....	489
Agreed to.....	491

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Celebration of the Arts</b>	
Mrs. Munro.....	491
<b>Blues and jazz festival</b>	
Mr. Peterson.....	491
<b>Gamma Foundries</b>	
Mr. Klees.....	492
<b>Union Villa</b>	
Mr. Wong.....	492
<b>Events in Goderich</b>	
Mrs. Mitchell.....	492
<b>Economic policy</b>	
Mr. Runciman.....	492
<b>Property taxation</b>	
Ms. Churley.....	493
<b>Health care</b>	
Mr. Rinaldi.....	493
<b>Automotive industry</b>	
Mr. Ramal.....	493

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Colleges Collective Bargaining Amendment Act, 2005, Bill 13, Mr. Marchese</b>	
Agreed to.....	494
Mr. Marchese.....	494
<b>Access to Justice Act, 2005, Bill 14, Mr. Bryant</b>	
Agreed to.....	494

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Justice system</b>	
Mr. Bryant.....	494
Mr. Runciman.....	496
Mr. Kormos.....	497
<b>Office of the Registrar General</b>	
Mr. Phillips.....	495
Mr. Tascona.....	496
Mr. Kormos.....	497

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Agreed to.....	498
----------------	-----

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Water quality</b>	
Mr. Tory.....	499, 502, 504
Mr. McGuinty.....	499, 501, 502
Mr. Hampton.....	500, 503, 505
Mr. Kwinter.....	503
Mr. Smitherman.....	504, 505
<b>Border security</b>	
Ms. Di Cocco.....	503
Mr. Bradley.....	503
<b>Economic policy</b>	
Mr. Flynn.....	505
Mr. Cordiano.....	505
<b>Trade development</b>	
Mr. Runciman.....	506
Mr. Cordiano.....	506
<b>Community colleges collective bargaining</b>	
Mr. Marchese.....	506
Mr. Bentley.....	506
<b>Healthier schools strategy</b>	
Mr. Brownell.....	507
Mr. Watson.....	507
<b>Infectious disease control</b>	
Mr. Jackson.....	508
Mr. Smitherman.....	508

## PETITIONS

<b>Minimum wage</b>	
Mr. Berardinetti.....	508
<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. O'Toole.....	508
Mr. Hardeman.....	508
<b>Macular degeneration</b>	
Mr. Craitor.....	508
<b>Mandatory retirement</b>	
Mr. Racco.....	509
Mr. Leal.....	509
<b>Leslie M. Frost centre</b>	
Ms. Scott.....	509

## Wildlife protection

Ms. Mossop.....	509
-----------------	-----

## Film release

Mr. O'Toole.....	510
------------------	-----

## Fallsview Casino

Mr. Craitor.....	510
------------------	-----

## Highway 35

Ms. Scott.....	510
----------------	-----

## GO transit tunnel

Mr. Ruprecht.....	510
-------------------	-----

## Ontario pharmacists

Mr. O'Toole.....	510
------------------	-----

## Prostate cancer

Mr. Craitor.....	511
------------------	-----

## SECOND READINGS

### Ending Mandatory Retirement Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, Bill 211, Mr. Peters

Mr. O'Toole.....	511, 519, 522, 523, 527
Mr. Berardinetti.....	512, 515
Mr. McNeely.....	512
Mr. Hardeman.....	512, 516
Mr. Marchese.....	515, 516, 520, 522
Mr. Wong.....	515
Mr. Duguid.....	515
Mr. Kwinter.....	518
Mr. Flynn.....	519
Mr. Rinaldi.....	519
Ms. Di Cocco.....	520, 523
Mr. Peterson.....	521
Mr. Fonseca.....	523
Mr. Racco.....	523
Mr. Hampton.....	526, 527
Mr. Levac.....	526
Mr. Sterling.....	527
Mr. Leal.....	527
Debate deemed adjourned.....	528

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Visitors

The Speaker.....	498
Mr. Klees.....	498

### Business of the House

Mr. Caplan.....	511
-----------------	-----

Continued overleaf





No. 12A

N° 12A

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**  
Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**  
Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# **Official Report of Debates (Hansard)**

# **Journal des débats (Hansard)**

**Monday 31 October 2005**

**Lundi 31 octobre 2005**

**Speaker**  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

**Clerk**  
Claude L. DesRosiers

**Président**  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

**Greffier**  
Claude L. DesRosiers



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.





## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 31 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 31 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### SMITHS FALLS DISTRICT COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** On Friday, October 21, I had the honour of participating in the opening of a new high school in my riding. The Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute's opening symbolizes what a community can do when faced with a challenge.

In the spring of 2001, I visited the old high school in Smiths Falls. With the help of guidance counsellor Pat Tobey, I was shown a 50-year-old institution that had outlived its usefulness. Imagine a school whose front office and foyer had to be supported by steel girders due to the failing ceiling. I was appalled that the young people of Smiths Falls and area had to come to this place each day to try to learn.

From that point on, the people of Smiths Falls rallied behind a cause that ultimately came to fruition with a brand new school. Rallies were held, petitions were filed and politicians from all levels were lobbied. Students Ashley Campbell, Bronwyn Cline and Megan James, along their principal, Debra Thomlinson, made a presentation to our Minister of Education right here at Queen's Park that was mature and reasoned.

The efforts of the students and citizens were unrelenting, and in the end the community was not only successful in getting a new, state-of-the-art school, but managed to open a program to provide similar funding for 50 to 69 other dilapidated schools across Ontario.

Thanks also go to Mr. Drew Nameth, a former Ministry of Education employee, for his work in creating a solution to this problem.

#### TORNADOES IN CENTRE WELLINGTON AND MAPLETON

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** On August 19, tornadoes touched down in Centre Wellington and Mapleton. I know we are all relieved that there were no serious injuries as a result of these tornadoes, and I want to congratulate all involved on their quick response. In particular, the municipalities of Centre Wellington and Mapleton, and also the Grand River Conservation Au-

thority along with community volunteers, did an excellent job of responding and providing relief to the affected citizens.

I also want to thank Monte Kwinter, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, who visited on August 23; Perth–Middlesex MPP John Wilkinson and Waterloo–Wellington MPP Ted Arnott, who are both strong advocates for the communities; and also the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, John Gerretsen, who toured Centre Wellington and Mapleton on September 1 to view the tornado damage.

In order to assess the damage, both the township of Centre Wellington and the township of Mapleton provided detailed information. As a result of the information gathered, the government has recognized that there are significant costs for cleanup on public property.

I am pleased to announce that the province is providing a grant to each municipality to cover some of these costs. Our government will provide a grant of \$182,500 for Centre Wellington and \$152,600 for Mapleton. Thank you to the province on behalf of the communities. These grants are greatly appreciated.

#### MNJIKANING FIRST NATION EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTRE

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** On Friday, October 28, I was honoured to be part of the official opening of a new daycare facility at Mnjikaning First Nation in my riding. I was joined that day by the Honourable James K. Bartleman, the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario; Chief Sharon Stinson Henry; the Honourable Paul DeVillers, our MP for Simcoe North; and the Honourable Mary Anne Chambers, Minister of Children and Youth Services.

The community selected the name Binoojiinsag Kinoomaagewgamig, which means "small children's learning place." The daycare will be situated in the Honourable James K. Bartleman Building, named in honour of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, a Mnjikaning First Nation community leader. He has championed education and literacy in First Nations communities during his term in office. His efforts have now generated annual campaigns that will continue to foster learning in our communities. We are honoured that he has allowed us to dedicate the building in his name.

The architects of the project were Teeple Architects of Toronto, and they have created a fascinating daycare

facility for the young people of Mnjikaning First Nation. It's a state-of-the-art building.

With the problems we've seen in some of the other First Nations communities across our province and our country, I think the people of Ontario and Canada would look to the Mnjikaning First Nation as a leader in many areas. I'm very proud to be the MPP for that area and to take part in this official opening.

#### EID-UL-FITR

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** Firstly, I would like to salute the spirit of tolerance and even celebration of diversity that this government and this House continuously demonstrates. In that spirit, it is a privilege for me to rise today and recognize one of the great Islamic celebrations and to extend to the Muslim community of Ontario, some 500,000 strong, felicitations on the end of the holy month of fasting, the month of Ramadan, and the celebration of Eid which will be taking place this week.

Eid is a time to come together as a community, to renew friendships and family ties, to exchange gifts, to forgive and to give thanks. This is a time for peace and for all Muslims in the world to devote to prayers and mutual well-being.

The first Eid was celebrated 1,400 years ago by a handful of followers. The same community, ably and strongly and vocally present in Canada, now numbers some one billion across the world.

Speaker, may I, with your permission, use this opportunity not only to extend greetings to the Muslim community but also to extend, on behalf of the Muslim community, gratitude and recognition to the whole country for the extraordinary outpouring of generosity, donations and moral support as the community deals with one or other natural disaster across the world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity. I wish all of my colleagues in this chamber and in the Muslim community of Ontario Eid Mubarak.

#### LUPUS DISEASE

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** As members of the assembly know, October is Lupus Awareness Month throughout much of the world. To recognize this in Ontario, many municipalities have raised lupus flags to raise awareness of this terrible disease and its effects.

I want to take this time to congratulate Patricia Leece, president of the Lupus Foundation of Ontario, which happens to be in Ridgeway in my riding of Erie-Lincoln, and all of her team and fundraisers. They have asked me to convey the following information to the Legislature.

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that affects one out of every 185 people; it can affect people of different races, ethnicities and ages, and affects men, women and children of all ages. The immune system attacks the body's own healthy cells, causing tissue damage, organ failure and, sadly, in some cases even death.

#### 1340

Medical research efforts into lupus and the discovery of a safe, more effective treatment for lupus patients are underfunded in comparison with disease of comparable magnitude and severity. Many physicians worldwide are unaware of the systems and health effects of lupus, causing people with lupus to suffer for many years before they obtain a correct diagnosis and medical treatment.

There is an urgent need to increase awareness in communities of the debilitating impact of lupus. I'd like us to join other communities across the province to proclaim that October is Lupus Awareness Month and to bring awareness to this little-known disease that affects many of our citizens.

#### JEFFREY BALDWIN

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** Today marks the last day of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Yesterday, a little boy named Jeffrey Baldwin was remembered and honoured in Greenwood Park in my riding, a little boy who died on November 30, 2003, just shy of his sixth birthday. Jeffrey had everything taken from him in his short life, and the horrific conditions under which he lived are unbearable to contemplate, but contemplate them we must: Jeffrey weighed only 21 pounds, the size of a one-year-old. He was kept locked in a small, filthy room, and rarely let out. He was starved to death.

A small sugar maple tree was planted in his honour, close to children's swings and a baseball diamond. There was also a rock with a plaque bearing his name and picture, and an inscription saluting Jeffrey saying, "Whose small voice we did not hear." The memorial to the little boy was conceived of by a woman named Amanda Reed, and to her we are grateful for organizing this event, along with Councillor Paula Fletcher, so that we could, together, under the bright autumn sun, remember this little boy and grieve for him.

At the end of the speeches, we formed a circle around Jeffrey's tree at the request of Councillor Fletcher, who said, "Let's encircle him in a way he was never encircled in life." Particularly moving was the attendance of the emergency personnel who first responded to the 911 call that day. There is a murder trial in process now, and after that, we hope there will be a coroner's inquest.

Yes, today marks the last official day of Child Abuse Prevention Month, but let's make every day Child Abuse Prevention Month. Make yourself think of Jeffrey Baldwin and his suffering, and let your anger and sorrow grow like a kernel deep inside you so that we can find ways to prevent something like this from happening to another child ever again.

#### UNILEVER CANADA

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** I'm pleased to rise today to acknowledge the expansion of Unilever Canada's Bramalea plant. This



expansion is the result of a \$3-million investment and will create 25 new jobs

This indeed is good news, not only for my riding of Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale, but also for the rest of the city of Brampton. The Bramalea plant currently employs approximately 325 people and manufactures Lipton and Knorr soups and side dishes. With this expansion, the site will be responsible for all the Lipton and Knorr soups for all of North America. Not only will this expansion better serve the North American market, but it will also serve the residents of greater Toronto area.

On behalf of the residents of my riding as well as Brampton, I would like to acknowledge Unilever Canada for choosing Bramalea as its Knorr-Lipton North American headquarters, for putting Bramalea on the map and for contributing not only to the economic well-being of the region of Peel, but to Ontario as a whole.

### CONSERVATION

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** Last week, our government fully demonstrated its commitment to protecting Ontario's parks, green space, woodlots and conservation reserves. The proposed legislation will ensure that the ecological integrity of parks and conservation reserves be considered a priority.

As a long-time advocate for green space, I am pleased to see this type of legislation being introduced. The legislation proposes mandatory reporting of the health of parks and the amalgamation of existing bylaws and legislation that governs parks and conservation reserves at this time.

Furthermore, it proposes to provide guidance and management to both parks and conservation reserves. The legislation also recognizes the unique needs of First Nations people and creates provisions to protect their needs accordingly.

In my riding of Thornhill, we have a number of woodlots and parks. In my 18 years as councillor, I always tried my best to make sure that the development of lands did not compromise the natural beauty of Ontario but promoted the use and appreciation of parks and woodlots. The Concord-Thornhill Regional Park, on Racco Parkway, has something for every member of the family, from its water park, to the picnic benches to sports fields.

The Sugar Bush Heritage Park in Thornhill is attached to a woodlot that is being developed by the city of Vaughan, the region of York and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority. The German Mills Settlers Park in Markham-Thornhill is 65 acres of natural park area.

Parks like these in my riding of Thornhill and across Ontario have made the quality of life of Ontarians better.

This legislation will ensure accountability—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

### CENOTAPH IN LUNENBURG

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** In my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlotten-

burgh, in the rural community of Lunenburg, there is a beautiful cenotaph at the Memorial Hill Cemetery. This cenotaph rests on a hill overlooking countryside and farmland. The names of brave men who gave their lives in defence of our European friends through two great wars are etched in stone.

Three years ago I visited the cenotaph to lay a wreath, only to realize that my wreath was the only one there. The cenotaph, for whatever reason, had faded from general memory, as have the men whose names it carries. Since then, I have maintained a yearly vigil, returning to that cenotaph every November 11 to ensure that the memory of those soldiers is never, ever allowed to be forgotten.

On this Remembrance Day, in the Year of the Veteran, I would encourage all members, indeed all Ontarians, to take the time to visit a local cenotaph in their community. I would also encourage everyone of our generation to look to our youth and instill in them a respect and understanding of all the sacrifices that our veterans have made, both living and deceased.

I will never allow the Memorial Hill Cemetery cenotaph, nor the memory of the great men it represents, to be neglected again. As a province, as a community, we must all do our part to ensure that the contributions of our veterans are honoured on this upcoming Remembrance Day.

### VISITORS

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to draw members' attention to the east members' gallery and introduce two guests making their first visit to the Ontario Legislature. We have two representatives of the executive MBA program from Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, BC. Please welcome Marg Vandenberg and the dean of the faculty of business administration, Ernie Love.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** That of course was not a point of order, but welcome.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### HEALTH INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT (INSULIN PUMPS FOR DIABETICS), 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ASSURANCE-SANTÉ (POMPES À INSULINE POUR DIABÉTIQUES)

Mr. Gravelle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 15, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act /  
Projet de loi 15, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-  
santé.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may have a brief statement.

**Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay–Superior North):** This legislation would amend the Health Insurance Act by making the provision of insulin pumps and the supplies for them an insured service under the act. For people with diabetes, the insulin pump makes an enormous difference in their day-to-day quality of life. In fact, the insulin pump can save the health care system substantial dollars by reducing hospital stays, let alone eliminating more dramatic health care consequences associated with diabetes such as amputations and loss of vision.

I am particularly grateful to the Thunder Bay branch of the Canadian Diabetes Association for their support of this initiative, and I look forward to second reading debate on my bill on Thursday, December 1.

#### DUFFINS ROUGE AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 SUR LA RÉSERVE AGRICOLE DE DUFFINS-ROUGE

Mr. Ramsay moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 16, An Act respecting the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve / Projet de loi 16, Loi concernant la Réserve agricole de Duffins-Rouge.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The minister may have a brief statement.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I'll defer to the time allotted for ministerial statements.

### MOTIONS

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent to put forward a motion regarding private members' public business. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following change be made to the ballot list of private members' public business: Mr. Patten and Mr. Berardinetti exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr. Patten assumes ballot item 57 and Mr. Berardinetti assumes ballot item 13.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, October 31, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Racco, Mario G.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kwinter, Monte	Ramal, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Levac, Dave	Ramsay, David
Brownell, Jim	Marsales, Judy	Rinaldi, Lou
Cansfield, Donna H.	Matthews, Deborah	Sandals, Liz
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Sergio, Mario
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Smith, Monique
Cordiano, Joseph	McNeely, Phil	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	Meilleur, Madeleine	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Milloy, John	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Oraziotti, David	Wong, Tony C.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Parsons, Ernie	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	Peters, Steve	Zimmer, David
Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry	
Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	O'Toole, John
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Marchese, Rosario	Runciman, Robert W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martel, Shelley	Sterling, Norman W.
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Tory, John
Horwath, Andrea	Munro, Julia	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 49; the nays are 20.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### DUFFINS-ROUGE AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I'm very pleased to rise in the House to affirm that this government is acting on its plan to conserve Ontario's prime



agricultural land and to ensure our communities are strong and healthy for generations to come. To help us accomplish that goal I've introduced both new legislation and amendments to the Conservation Land Act that, if passed, would ensure that the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve is set aside permanently for agricultural use.

If passed, the legislation would reinforce the conditions of an agreement signed in 1999 by the province, the region of Durham and the city of Pickering. The three parties to that agreement all agreed that the agricultural lands in the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve would be held in perpetuity. To me, "in perpetuity" means forever.

The 1999 agreement was clear. Under it, the city of Pickering was entrusted with holding the easements of the lands. Once the province, Pickering and Durham signed the agreement, the lands were sold by the province to the original landowners or tenant farmers. The sale price was based on the land continuing to be used for agriculture. Yet on March 1, 2005, the city of Pickering unilaterally, without consulting the province, removed the agricultural easements on two thirds of the properties sold by the province in the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve. In other words, Pickering broke the agreement it signed six years ago and violated the trust that was placed in the city to protect those lands. The city of Pickering's actions have created the impression that the lands may be available for development and have put their protection at risk.

Many of the properties sold by the province to the local farmers have since been sold to land developers. Conserving prime agricultural land is vital if we want to ensure that Ontario's farmers can continue to grow the foods that we eat.

In fact, the last two provincial governments both recognized the importance of the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve. Through a series of letters from Minister Phillips, Minister Caplan and myself, we have repeatedly asked the city of Pickering to reinstate the easements and respect this agreement, yet the city of Pickering's only response to these letters to date is a letter stating that it cannot reinstate the easements. This response does nothing to ensure the long-term protection of these important agricultural lands that the city agreed to. Instead, it strongly suggests that the city of Pickering would rather see them developed. It also makes clear that Pickering has no intention of honouring the agreement it signed in 1999.

There are no second chances when it comes to protecting agricultural land and green space. Once it's developed, there's no going back, and that's why we must act now. The legislation that I've introduced, if passed, would ensure that all existing conservation easements on the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve are held in perpetuity. It would also reinstate easements previously held and released by the city of Pickering.

The proposed amendments to the Conservation Land Act, if passed, would provide greater certainty about using conservation easements to provide long-term pro-

tection for natural features and agricultural land on private property.

This government has taken a number of steps to strengthen the protection of farmlands and natural areas in the Golden Horseshoe. It has passed the Greenbelt Act; it has strengthened the provincial policy statement by setting clear ground rules for how Ontario communities will grow and prosper; it has developed the greater Golden Horseshoe growth plan and the proposed central Pickering development plan; and earlier this year, I announced both Ontario's biodiversity strategy and our natural spaces program.

The legislation I introduced today is another important step toward ensuring healthy growth in southern Ontario and leaving our children a legacy of protected agricultural lands and green space.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I rise today to advise the members of an important milestone in our discussions with the province of Manitoba to help supply Ontario with clean hydroelectric power.

The government of Ontario has signed an agreement with Manitoba to negotiate the purchase of 400 megawatts of clean, renewable power. The clean energy transfer will begin in 2006 with 150 megawatts, increasing to 400 megawatts as transmission upgrades come on-line to increase capacity between Winnipeg and Thunder Bay. The upgrades are expected to be completed by 2009, representing a doubling of east-west grid capacity at the critical Manitoba-Ontario connection point. Total energy supply will amount to 2.5 terawatt hours annually, or enough electricity to power 250,000 homes.

A second phase allows for a longer-term arrangement to help develop hydroelectric sites starting early next decade in northern Manitoba, including Conawapa. These projects could deliver from 1,500 megawatts to as much as 3,000 megawatts of electricity over a new transmission line.

This project will benefit both provinces by making a major contribution to helping Ontario replace coal-fired power with a cleaner source of energy. It will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create employment and economic opportunities in Ontario and in Manitoba, particularly in northern and First Nations communities.

As we move forward, an important stage will be the identification of a preferred route to transfer electricity from Manitoba to southern Ontario, and the eventual launching of regulatory approvals. As a critical part of the process, the government of Ontario will seek greater involvement of First Nations, leading to a formal consultation process. The government will also explore possible roles for the federal government.

As we continue to move forward on the clean energy transfer initiative with Manitoba, it is important to recognize how this agreement fits with our overall energy plan for the province. Our energy plan consists of three key components: building new generation capacity; maxi-



mizing our existing generation and transmission assets; and creating a culture of conservation. In all of these areas, our government is taking decisive action.

In just two years, our government has brought on-line more than 2,200 megawatts of power, and we are going further. This government has set the wheels in motion on projects that will provide us with nearly 9,000 megawatts of power over the next five years, and over a quarter of this power will be from renewable resources. At 9,000 megawatts, this would be enough to power over four million homes. In fact, between 2004 and 2007, no other jurisdiction on this continent will secure more new generation capacity than Ontario, thanks to the decisive leadership of this government.

1410

Our agreement with Manitoba is another effective way of increasing the supply available to our province. While we are building upon our existing relationship with Manitoba, we are also continuing our discussions on the other side of the country with the government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Hydroelectric power is clean power, and these clean power resources in Manitoba and Newfoundland, along with our own resources, will strengthen our national energy supply and security.

Our plan is bold, and our vision for our province is clear: an Ontario where industry has a reliable source of clean, affordable energy; an Ontario that leads in renewable and sustainable energy supply; an Ontario that remains prosperous and is the envy of the world.

I will continue to carry out this plan, and I look forward to working with all Ontarians to make it happen.

#### DUFFINS-ROUGE AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to respond to the statement from the Minister of Natural Resources. The Minister of Natural Resources keeps coming into the Legislature and introducing bills of which we have no notice. I have been attending House leaders' meetings, and one of the questions we—the third party and the opposition—have asked is that we could have an outline of what legislation the government is planning to introduce in this session of the Legislature. I can only assume that the minister is making up these bills weekly on the back of a napkin, because they keep on introducing bills of which we are receiving no notice.

This bill is not new news. Former municipal affairs ministers Chris Hodgson and David Young were involved with this and have always been clear that they wanted to maintain this land as agricultural. The former Minister of Finance, Janet Ecker, ran in the last election being very clear that she wanted to preserve this land. You have to contrast that with the current member for Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** What did he say?

**Mr. Miller:** He said one thing to get elected, and now the government's doing something very, very different. I

would like to quote from some of the newspapers that point that out.

The Toronto Star, Tuesday, October 7, 2003: "Environmentalists are concerned that Pickering mayor Wayne Arthurs ... will try to influence his Liberal colleagues at Queen's Park to change their own policy and provincial rules on the protection of farmland and open space in the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve and the neighbouring planned community of Seaton."

"The Tories' stand on the preserve has been clear, to the extent that former municipal affairs minister David Young took all planning for the area out of the hands of the city of Pickering when officials threatened to develop the preserve."

Ms. Janet Ecker "wants it left untouched, but developers and Pickering mayor Wayne Arthurs, the Liberal candidate, argue the use of the land should be open to negotiation."

Sunday, May 18: "David Young, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, was not available for comment, but in the Ontario Legislature May 6, he said that in the 1999 agreement it was 'made clear that this land would remain agricultural forevermore.'"

Sunday, September 7: "Ecker Stands Her Ground; MPP Says She Will Continue To Defend Agricultural Preserve."

The Tory position is clear.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** The announcement by the energy minister today is no real announcement at all. We already have the capacity to import power from Manitoba and have had that in place for some time. The rest of it is down the road: this optimistic dreaming that this government keeps planning, that they're going to have all these kinds of things in place—prior to what? Prior to shutting down over 20% of our capacity in this province between 2007 and 2009. But there's no assurance they're going to have new placements up and operating.

These new transmission lines and these kinds of approvals are going to involve an awful lot of jurisdictions. They're going to involve First Nations lands and all kinds of environmental approvals that must be sought and received. And there's no guarantee that this government will have those things in place at that time.

But they are under a great deal of pressure, because they made these kinds of commitments with regard to shutting down from 20% to 25% of our capacity without having any kind of plan in place on how they were going to make up for the shortfall. They made the promise, and now they're dancing around, trying to figure out how they are going to get there. They're making all these kinds of announcements. They're running roughshod over all kinds of people. All these announcements in Mississauga with power plants—there are three: one in Oakville, two in Mississauga. We're down to one now because they're having all kinds of problems as they



come out with plan A, B—we're up to about plan L, and they're still evolving every day.

The question is: When are they going to actually tell the people of Ontario what power they actually have coming on-line, guaranteed, working in the mix, not, "We hope, we're planning, we're optimistic and this is what we're looking forward to"? The people of Ontario need to know that they're going to have juice in the lines and that when they turn on that switch, the lights are going to go on. Right now, all we get is announcement after announcement, but the lights really aren't going on over there. The lights aren't going on over there. We need some real ideas and we need some real plans, not hope. This is Ontario. This is not a field of dreams.

#### DUFFINS-ROUGE AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** Well, well, well, what have we here today? I think we have an admission by the Liberal government, finally, that the greenbelt is not permanent, and it's not able to protect lands like the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve.

I've got the record here. I asked a question back on May 31, 2005, and this is what Gerry Phillips, from management board, said: "The member will know that we have our greenbelt legislation; we have the minister's order on the agricultural preserve, which we believe will protect the agricultural preserve. So we're quite confident that we have the tools in place to ensure that that important property stays as an agricultural preserve."

The member ends by saying, "So I hope the member can rest relatively comfortably." Well, I want the government to know I haven't been resting relatively comfortably, because I knew at the time and said at the time that this is a floating greenbelt. Indeed, developers know that as well. I'm looking forward to seeing the legislation, but I do want to say to the government: We've got the big pipe, we've got Simcoe south, we've got a floating greenbelt. Preserves like this are not—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Churley:** It's the truth. You've got to admit that this admits it today. So I'm calling on the government to amend that greenbelt to make it fixed, not the floating greenbelt that it is, so you don't have to bring in stand-alone pieces of legislation like this to protect valuable farmland.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** I have to respond to the Minister of Energy, who brings in yet another McGuinty spin exercise today that has virtually no substance to it. This is what it amounts to: The government announced today that it has a deal for a transmission line from Manitoba to southern Ontario. Did it announce that it has a deal to bring the 1,500 megawatts from Conawapa to southern Ontario? No, Speaker. That's still something that might happen, perhaps, maybe

will happen—who knows?—in the future. What we did get is simply this: The existing 200-megawatt transmission line which connects northwestern Ontario with Manitoba is going to be upgraded to a 400-megawatt transmission line. But guess what? You can't move that electricity past Thunder Bay. It does nothing for electricity-short southern Ontario. Yet, the McGuinty government continues to try to spin this as something that's going to solve an electricity shortage problem in southern Ontario.

It also repeats something else that isn't happening. The McGuinty government continues to say, "Oh, there's 9,000 megawatts of new supply," but then you go through the list. They talk about Pickering A, unit 1. Well, that happened under the Conservatives. That's not 9,000 megawatts of new supply. Then they refer to cogeneration from the Toronto airport authority. That didn't happen under this government. That too was under the Conservatives. Then they talk about new natural gas from Calpine. Hello over there; have you checked? Calpine is about that far from bankruptcy in the United States. Does this sound like another Enron? The list goes on. They talk about 500 megawatts of new natural gas in downtown Toronto. That's nowhere to be found—nowhere to be found. Then they talk about the refurbishment of Bruce A, units 1 and 2—1,500 megawatts. But if you read the agreement, if and when Bruce A, 1 and 2 come on line, Bruce A, 3 and 4 go down. What we hear is the McGuinty government continuing to try to spin a line, continuing to try to tell people that there's new supply, when this is clearly the emperor with no clothes. As soon as you look under the curtain, it's not very pretty. This is indeed the emperor with no clothes.

**1420**

The other point that I want to make is this: People in northwestern Ontario do not have an electricity shortage; people in northwestern Ontario actually have an electricity surplus. The issue across northwestern Ontario, where the McGuinty government is busy shutting down pulp mills and paper mills because of skyrocketing electricity prices, is affordability of electricity. Is this deal going to do anything for affordability? No. Paper mills that are 10 kilometres away from a hydro dam where you can produce electricity for \$10 a megawatt are going to continue to pay \$80 a megawatt because of the McGuinty government's insane electricity policy.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### ECONOMIC POLICY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My first question is for the Acting Premier. Tomorrow is the massively publicized date on which Justice Gomery will deliver his report on the federal sponsorship scandal, something that is already dominating the news. Can you assure us that it was just a coincidence that your update



on the Ontario economy was scheduled for the same day, virtually guaranteeing that nobody will hear about it?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I can assure the honourable member that we consider this very good news for the people of Ontario—the fact that our government has created more jobs than any government for the last decade. Actually, it's sad news for us that there might be some competition in the media tomorrow, because we think that it's very important for the people of Ontario to know that because of the policies of this government, businesses in the province are able to actually hire more people and create jobs.

**Mr. Tory:** I guess that assurance probably fits into the same category as a McGuinty election promise. But, having said that, because of the policies of your government, as you point out, actually 42,000 families in Ontario now have one less paycheque to go on because 42,000 families in Ontario have been affected by the loss of manufacturing jobs over the course of this year alone. On Saturday, it was reported that Hemosol, a once promising biotechnology company and manufacturer of blood-related proteins—exactly the kinds of jobs we have to have in Ontario—announced that it was laying off two thirds of its employees; 50 more families to add to the 42,000 manufacturing jobs lost in Ontario in the past year.

Much as you might hope that no one will notice, can you guarantee in the economic statement being brought forward by your government tomorrow that there will be specific measures and provisions to address those 42,000 families and the situation they're in?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** What I feel very safe in committing to the people of Ontario is that they will be most encouraged that this government has reduced the debt of the province and has reduced the deficit—

**Interjection:** That's the Tory debt; the Tory deficit.

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** That's the Tory debt. We're also reducing the deficit, a deficit that was left by the previous government. The people of Ontario will also be very encouraged to know that during the term of this government, Ontario companies and manufacturers have in fact established 193,000 new jobs for the economy of Ontario. We believe that's very good news.

**Mr. Tory:** They of course will be most interested in seeing the details of the reduction in the provincial debt that the Acting Premier has just announced.

Now, Acting Premier—this one, we might be able to get closer to an answer on—aside from manufacturing, another area that's close to home for you, a critical area where people are struggling in this province is on the farm. Last week, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture said that the men and women who put food on our tables are swimming in debt and are facing financial ruin. Last Thursday, they called for \$100 million to help cover what they called a disastrous 2004-05 crop year. The farmers say they need immediate assistance to cover this year's debts and to have the money necessary to fund next year's crops. The grain and oilseed safety net committee

was quoted in the press as saying, "The farm income crisis in Ontario has put farm families and their neighbours in jeopardy."

My question is this: Even if the economic statement will be happening under the cover of Gomery darkness, will you guarantee us that specific, detailed help for the farmers of Ontario will be in that statement tomorrow afternoon? Will you give us that guarantee?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** I'd like to remind the honourable member that we have, number one, increased the budget at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. If you want to talk about what this government is doing to alleviate and to support farmers and to help them deal with their debt issues, just last week this government made an announcement. In keeping with our commitment to support them with their nutrient management infrastructure, we have always committed to spending \$20 million. Last week, I'm very happy to say that our ministry committed an additional \$3.7 million to farmers to support them in their investments in nutrient management infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

#### ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I think you should be setting aside some of that money for nutrient management infrastructure down here. There's a big need for that.

My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. The minister said last week on CBC Radio that her adoption bill, Bill 183, concerned adoption disclosure and not privacy. Would you not agree with me that there are some serious privacy issues arising out of your legislation, and do you have any intention of addressing them?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** I appreciate this question, because I know that this Leader of the Opposition will recall our telephone conversations around this so that we could show the Leader of the Opposition exactly what our intent would be in this bill, through regulation, once it became law.

Let me reiterate those things for him. What we would do in regulation we have now moved, through amendments, into the bill itself: We would structure a board where individuals who understand that they may come to harm can in fact apply for a disclosure veto. This was very important. It was always our intent that we would have a bill that would have the right balance, to protect people from coming to harm because of a change in the law and, as well, finally to allow people who have a right to information to access that right but still have people maintaining their privacy.

**Mr. Tory:** My supplementary to the minister is this. In June, information and privacy commissioners from across Canada added their voice unanimously to the debate, demanding a disclosure veto to protect privacy. I want to quote from their press release: "Birth parents and adoptees should not have to demonstrate significant harm



in order to maintain their privacy. For those who do not wish to have their private records disclosed, the disclosure is the harm." They're referring, of course, to your law, which will make people come forward and beg for their privacy.

Minister, will you agree right now that, if you insist on making people plead for their privacy, which you shouldn't do—at the least, you can stand here in this House this afternoon and say that this bill will not be proclaimed until such time as you have made public and for discussion and consultation those draft regulations you've been talking about for months now. We still haven't seen them and seen what guarantees they contain and what requirements they have. Will you make them public before you proclaim the bill, so we can all discuss them and consult on them?

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** Once again, the Leader of the Opposition would recall the conversations that he and I have had as to the detail of this bill, which we were very happy to share because he should know the intent of the government. In fact, if this bill does go to a vote in this House soon, it nevertheless won't receive royal assent for an additional 18 months, which gives us the opportunity for a significant campaign to make people in Ontario and abroad very aware of the implications of this change. The Leader of the Opposition is aware of that. That also buys us 18 months—a significant amount of time. Some of the work has already been done so that we will be ready on the ground for the kinds of changes we need to make for the protection of people.

We have been very clear: This is a bill that is about balance. It is about the fact that people deserve information, and yet there are people who should be entitled to privacy. It is a right to information, not a right to a relationship. I believe this bill strikes that balance.

1430

**Mr. Tory:** If we have the 18 months, I don't understand for the life of me why you can't just say yes, you will publish the draft regulations and have them subject to discussion and consultation with this Legislature and people outside. I don't understand. You've got time for an ad campaign and all the other things.

I just want to read you a passage from a letter dated October 23, sent to the Premier from a birth mother. She says:

"I was promised in a courtroom 35 years ago, a frightened teenager, surrounded by learned lawyers and a judge, that the adoption records would be sealed. Now this legislation will allow them to be opened and I will not have a say in the matter. Ms. Papatello says there is nothing in law to say that the records would be forever sealed. Tell that to the frightened teenager who believed what she was being told in that courtroom so many years ago. She has rebuilt her life on a cruel fallacy."

Minister, do you have anything to say to these people who placed their trust in our system and now feel that you and your colleagues have completely forgotten about them and their rights?

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** I would again like to remind the Leader of the Opposition of my invitation months ago to

have the Leader of the Opposition himself participate with his views as to the specifics of the regulation. We have made that available not just to him but as well to everyone who has an interest here. We in fact want to strike the right balance and intend to do that, both with the bill and with regulations.

Let me say as well that right here in Ontario, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, which is supporting the bill, knows better than most people in this House the dire circumstances that people may have been in or are in today. Let me also remind the Leader of the Opposition that finally, with this bill, will come protections that do not exist today, that in fact today those very women are receiving those phone calls and those knocks on the door with no access to a no-contact and no access to the potential for a disclosure veto.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Acting Premier. Last week the Premier said, "It's the McGuinty government's job to help Ontario communities facing emergencies." Today, as we speak, drinking water is unfit to drink in 51 Ontario First Nations communities. Many of these communities are Kashechewans in waiting. Can you tell us what action, prior to Monday of last week, the McGuinty government took to ensure safe, clean drinking water for Ontario First Nations communities with boil-water advisories?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** Our government is committed to implementing the recommendations from Justice O'Connor. O'Connor has made it very clear that the province of Ontario has a responsibility to offer our resources with respect to water testing and training of water facility operators. Our province is certainly ready to support the federal government in any plan that they would have or at any time when they would express a need to do that. You would know as well that the Premier has communicated with the Prime Minister of Canada, and this government certainly stands ready with our resources available when asked.

**Mr. Hampton:** It seems that once again you want to refer to jurisdictional differences. I can tell you that what First Nations and First Nations people have experienced is jurisdictional indifference from your government and the federal government.

I want to ask you about the Six Nations of the Grand River near Brantford. People there have been under a boil-water advisory since the late 1990s. Study after study has shown the water in up to 80% of the 2,700 wells that supply most of the 12,000 residents is contaminated with everything from rats to E. coli. What has the McGuinty government done to make sure the Six Nations citizens—citizens of Ontario—can drink their water?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** Again, I say to the honourable member that this government stands ready to assist in the support of the federal government, which has the responsibility for managing water issues on First



Nations reserves. It did come to the attention of this government, I believe it was in April 2004, that there were serious water issues on the Six Nations reserve. At that time the Minister of the Environment wrote to the federal minister to make it very clear that Ontario was prepared to provide the resources that we had that may assist that level of government; the level of government that has responsibility for managing clean water issues on First Nations properties. We are very prepared to be there to help them.

**Mr. Hampton:** So once again the response from the McGuinty government has been to write a letter.

I want to ask you about Kee-Way-Win First Nation, which has been under a do-not-drink-the-water advisory since 2004 because the water is contaminated with uranium. The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte have had a boil-water advisory since 2003. The Neskantaga First Nation has been under a boil-water advisory for almost 10 years.

Unsafe drinking water for Ontario First Nations is a public health disgrace. Fifty-one First Nations in Ontario under the McGuinty government have boil-water advisories, and your indifference and inaction is obvious to everyone.

Tell me this: What is your government prepared to do now to assist these First Nations so they can begin to overcome this obvious, disgraceful situation of tainted drinking water?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** Our government is absolutely committed to putting all of the resources that we have responsibility to manage to assist the federal government in their responsibility to ensure that there is safe, clean drinking water on First Nations reserves.

The statistics that the honourable member brings forward, indeed, are disturbing and that is why our Premier and this government stand prepared—as Justice O’Conner made very clear that we have a responsibility to do—to work with the federal government to provide them with the resources that we have that will assist them in ensuring that people on First Nations reserves have access to clean, safe drinking water.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Acting Premier: You mentioned the Walkerton report. Again, it says, “Members of First Nations are also residents of Ontario. There can be no justification for acquiescing in the application of a lesser public health standard on certain residents of Ontario ... the province, if asked,” by First Nations, “has much to contribute.”

Last year, Ontario earmarked \$90 million over two years for water quality projects through the Canada-Ontario rural infrastructure fund and the northern Ontario heritage fund. We know that First Nations asked for your help. Can you tell us how much of that \$90 million the McGuinty government moved toward First Nations to improve their water quality infrastructure?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** Our government is very proud that we’ve had the opportunity to work with our federal government and our municipal partners to invest

in rural infrastructure in the province of Ontario. Again, I’d like to remind the honourable member—and he has quoted O’Conner—that I believe O’Conner has been very clear that the responsibility for providing clean, safe drinking water on First Nations properties is the responsibility of the federal government. The Prime Minister of Canada, in more than one statement, I believe, has made it very clear that this is a federal responsibility.

What I will say to the honourable member is that our government stands ready, when asked by the federal government, to provide the human resources for training, testing and so on, so that peoples on First Nations can access clean and safe drinking water.

1440

**Mr. Hampton:** I asked how much of the \$90 million that you announced was going to First Nations to help them with issues of water quality. I know why you didn’t answer: because under the McGuinty government, nothing went to First Nations.

Previous Ontario governments have understood that there is a serious problem with the quality of drinking water on First Nations. The NDP government invested \$48 million over four years in water and sewer upgrades on First Nations because, despite the jurisdiction, we saw that there was a problem. Even the Harris Conservative government invested \$70 million over eight years to upgrade sewer and water quality on First Nations. What has the McGuinty government invested? Well, a year and a half ago you invested \$200,000 in one community. Since that, nothing.

Can you tell me, Minister, why the McGuinty government continues to speak with all these platitudes, yet you have invested nothing in sewer and water quality on First Nations?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** I remind the honourable member that our government is committed to the recommendations contained in the Walkerton inquiry. Very clearly in that document it identifies where the responsibility for providing clean, safe drinking water is for First Nations people.

Just as we are taking that responsibility in the province of Ontario very seriously for those areas where we have jurisdiction, we assume that the federal government would have done the same. The Prime Minister of Canada has made it very clear that this is a federal responsibility. Our government has made it very clear that we are prepared to provide the resources, as O’Connor has recommended, to support the federal government to provide clean, safe drinking water for First Nations peoples in the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker:** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, over the last 15 years, previous Ontario governments saw there was a serious problem. They didn’t run around blaming constitutional this or constitutional that; they didn’t point the finger at the Prime Minister. They took action. I agree with you: Paul Martin has been missing in action, but Dalton McGuinty has been missing in action on this file as well.

There is an epidemic of bad water on First Nations. The McGuinty government is contributing zero dollars to



try to fix that problem. Tell us, Minister, will you stop the platitudes, stop telling First Nations you feel their pain, and start making some financial investments to improve the quality of water in their communities?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** I would like to remind the honourable members that this government acted to protect the First Nations when there was an emergency. That is what this government did. The Prime Minister of Canada has announced that he has a plan so that First Nations peoples will be guaranteed clean, safe drinking water. Our government is absolutely committed to working with the federal government to enact that plan, because there's no question that First Nations peoples, whether they are in Ontario or any other province of Canada, deserve that kind of consideration. Their people deserve clean, fresh drinking water.

**The Speaker:** New question. The member for Parry Sound-Muskoka

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources, and it also has to do with the emergency in Kashechewan. Minister, when did you become aware of the 1992 emergency preparedness agreement between Ottawa and Ontario?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I became aware at 12:30 on Tuesday, when federal minister Andy Scott called me from his office in Ottawa.

**Mr. Miller:** Well, that makes it very interesting. In Kashechewan there's been a boil-water advisory for two years. There's been your Ontario clean drinking water report from 2003 that identified a problem.

Didn't your past minister, who is now the Attorney General, who had been responsible for aboriginal affairs for the last year and a half, brief you on your responsibilities? Minister, now that you are responsible for aboriginal affairs, this falls under your ministry. What steps are you taking to ensure the province is kept apprised of conditions in other First Nation communities in Ontario, especially now that we know that there are 51 First Nations reserves across the province that have a boil-water advisory?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Last week, I asked the Ministry of the Environment if they would do a survey of all the First Nations in Ontario. They have undertaken that, and they said they will get that report to me tomorrow.

#### VIOLENT CRIME

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is to the Acting Premier. Day after day, the gun violence continues in the largest city in Ontario. And day after day, you and your government say that you are consulting, but you refuse to address the fundamental causes of crime.

Ontario's so-called Safe Schools Act is really the gang recruitment act. It takes kids who are most likely to get into trouble and throws them out of school, throws them on the street with no resources so gangs can recruit them.

Students, parents, community activists, educators, even your own Ontario Human Rights Commission, have called on you to repeal this act, but you've done nothing.

Can you tell us when the McGuinty government will stop giving speeches on this issue and repeal the act?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I think it's important that the people of Ontario understand the commitment of this Minister of Education to deal with this. It is because of his concern that he has made a commitment to review the safe schools legislation. There will be consultations; they will begin this month in the city of Toronto.

The minister recognizes that certainly there are issues when young people are no longer able to attend in a school system. We see that, quite frankly, as a waste of our human resources and we are making investments to ensure that our young people stay in school until the age of 18. We believe it's important that they continue to learn; it may not be in a formal school setting, but we see tremendous opportunity for our young people to continue to learn up until the age of 18.

Those are the kinds of programs that this Minister of Education is implementing.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, 64 young people are dead on the streets of Toronto. What we need is some action. We don't need more dithering, we don't need more speeches; we need some action.

Before the election, you said you were opposed to the Safe Schools Act because it discriminated against youth who were already in trouble. You said it discriminated against black youth. You said it discriminated against poor youth. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has said that, yes, it discriminates.

Earlier today a 16-year-old, Keelon Featherstone, who was handcuffed, placed in a cruiser and strip-searched by police after he was wrongly accused of stealing pop and chips at school, said this act needs to be repealed.

Can you tell the people of Ontario how long you are going to consult, how long you are going to dither, how many more young people are going to be shot on the street?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** As I've already indicated, our government is committed to reviewing the legislation. We are committed to consulting with the people in our communities, with families who have children in schools, with families who have been affected by this legislation and with people in our larger communities. We believe that that is the responsible way to move forward.

I think it's fair to say that our government is absolutely committed to keeping young people in school as long as they can be. That's why we will be introducing legislation to require young people to learn until the age of 18. That does not necessarily mean they're going to be in a regular school setting, but they will be in an instructional setting. We are working to improve access to apprenticeship programs for young people in Ontario. Our youth are our greatest resource, and we believe in investing in their development.



## SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. We know that children have a better chance of succeeding when they arrive at class well nourished, and our government has made significant investments to ensure that our children are ready and eager to learn by the time they reach grade 1.

Our government has also made substantial investments to improve the quality of our children's education once they reach grade 1 to help ensure that these students succeed. But if a child arrives at school hungry, it's unlikely they will fully benefit from a higher-quality educational experience.

Minister, what is our government doing to ensure that our children arrive at school well nourished and ready to learn?

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** I'm very pleased to respond to the question from my colleague the MPP for Huron–Bruce.

Last year we announced that we would do more than simply increase the funding for the student nutrition program. We have almost doubled the funding from \$4.5 million per year to \$8.5 million a year. In fact, as of last month, the start of this school year, 253,000 students are receiving breakfasts or snacks or lunches as a result of this revamped program. I remember making this announcement and hearing stories about teachers sending kids to rooms to get snacks so that they could perform more effectively.

1450

**Mrs. Mitchell:** That is wonderful news. I know that our government is making a substantial commitment to our children on being well nourished and ready to learn at school each day.

But we all know that different communities have different needs. You've mentioned the revamped program, that it will be in a better position to meet local needs. Minister, could you explain how that program will work?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The program has been revamped to include more involvement from local agencies. There are now 15 local agencies helping to determine the needs of local communities and to deliver to those needs. We also had dietitians contribute to the redesign of the programs so that food is more nutritious. So 67,000 more young people will have access to fresher, more nutritious breakfasts, snacks and lunches.

I'm pleased to tell the member from Huron–Bruce that, in your region, more than 37,000 students are benefiting. I want to thank you for your interest in this and your support for your young people in your region; \$1.2 million went to your region.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** To the Acting Premier: Ontario has some of the toughest

laws for safe, clean drinking water, yet under your government's watch—under your watch—the Six Nations community turned up a report of 82% of their wells showing coliform. They have the largest native community in Canada with some of the dirtiest water in the country.

A year and a half ago, I raised the following questions in the Ontario Legislature, and I'll give your government another chance to answer: "Where is the provincial-federal coordination on drinking water" for Six Nations? Does "the left hand know what the right hand is doing? Are both levels of government talking to each other?" Do you not appreciate the urgency of the situation? Question number 5: Do you believe the water at Six Nations is safe?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** The honourable member would know that the Leader of the Opposition asked this question of the Premier last week, at which time the Premier made it very clear that it was in April 2004 that the Minister of the Environment for this government wrote to the federal minister and made it very clear that we were aware of this issue and that our government was prepared to provide whatever resources the federal government would require to assist them in addressing the water quality issue on the Six Nations reserve.

We continue to be committed to providing those resources when the federal government needs that support. That is also consistent with what Justice O'Connor would say the role of the provincial government should be: that the responsibility is that of the federal government, but that the province of Ontario should be able to provide resources that may not be available to the federal government to deal with water quality issues on First Nations reserves.

**Mr. Barrett:** You've written a letter, but it has been a year and a half, Acting Premier, and we're still waiting for some action. We're seeing lack of information-sharing. We're seeing finger pointing. We need leadership, not bickering between different levels of government. This is not a game of hot potato. People's lives are at stake.

I stated five questions. I think I'll state them again and give you an opportunity to answer. These were questions posed a year and a half ago: Where is the provincial-federal coordination? Does the left hand know what the right hand is doing? Are both levels of government talking to each other? Do you not appreciate the urgency of this situation? Do you believe the water at Six Nations is safe? Those are the five questions.

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** Our government certainly does believe that water quality is a priority for all of the people of Ontario. For those people for whom we have responsibility as a province, for municipal water systems, we are making significant investments, and we are ensuring that the recommendations of Justice O'Connor will be implemented. When I speak of Justice O'Connor and his recommendations, he also identified that there are water quality issues that must be considered on First Nations reserves. He has made it very clear that it is the



responsibility of the federal government. The Prime Minister of Canada has accepted and acknowledged that it is a federal responsibility. Our provincial government has, on more than one occasion, made it very clear that our government is prepared to provide whatever resources we can to the federal government so they can ensure that water on First Nations property is safe for the people who live there.

#### LANDFILL

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** I have a question for the Acting Premier. It's another water question. For over seven years now, the Mohawk First Nation at the Bay of Quinte has been opposing the proposed expansion of the Richmond landfill. They warned how the expansion of this landfill puts their source of drinking water at even further risk. Like Kashechewan and 51 other First Nations, this Mohawk one is already under a boil-water advisory.

Now the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has released a report confirming this very point. In light of CEAA's findings and the evacuation happening because of water contamination, will you stop the Richmond landfill expansion today?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** To the parliamentary assistant for the Minister of the Environment.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** I'd like to thank the member for the question and bring you up to date about Richmond. I understand that the environmental assessment process is still underway, but it's important to note that citizens will have two opportunities to contribute their comments on the proposed project. There are seven weeks to comment on the proponent's EA report and five weeks to comment on the ministry's review report. I would encourage citizens to participate in the EA process.

**Ms. Churley:** This happens to be in the Acting Premier's riding, so I'd think there would be an interest here, given the report that just came out. It warns that the leachate could seep out of the proposed mega-dump into surrounding waterways that provide the Bay of Quinte Mohawk First Nation with their drinking water.

On the campaign trail, Minister, your government expressed your opposition to this landfill, but then once in office you sided with the project's proponent, Waste Management Canada. The report says that this landfill site appears to be in violation of several of Justice O'Connor's recommendations from the Walkerton inquiry, yet you are still siding with this company. Will you do what is necessary? Forget about the EA, just stop it in light of what's going on on First Nations in this province. Stand up here today and say you will stop this landfill from going ahead.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Parliamentary assistant.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It's basically unbelievable that a member with your experience in this House would say to

this House that we should get rid of the environmental assessment process in this process on a party. I can tell you that there is an environmental assessment process underway.

**Ms. Churley:** Tell the truth.

**The Speaker:** Order. I need the member for Toronto–Danforth to withdraw.

**Ms. Churley:** I withdraw.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It's very important that all of us in this House respect the environmental assessment process that we find ourselves using in this province. It provides checks and balances. It protects people. It protects the environment for our children and our grandchildren. Though sometimes people can be taken away with emotion and say that we should somehow get rid of this process, I would tell the member, yet again, that it is not in the best interests of people. What citizens in this province need to do is look at the process underway and participate in it. That is what the Ministry of the Environment encourages for all citizens with concerns about this or any other process, any other project that is under the environmental assessment process.

1500

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, this past summer, a number of incidents of domestic violence occurred within my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh. On Saturday, September 17, the life of a 28-year-old woman, who contributed much to her community, was cut short through a tragic murder. This young woman, who has been described as a kind soul by those who knew her, is not a statistic; she was a woman considered by everyone to be bubbly, attractive and perhaps, most telling, so young. Sadly, her story is not unique. Here are two headlines that appeared in local press this past summer from my riding: "Woman Pushed to the Ground and Kicked" and "Living in Fear: Domestic Abuse a Disturbing Problem." There have been similar stories from across the province.

Minister, I know that you take issues of domestic abuse and violence very seriously. Could you tell us what the government is doing to combat the increase in such crimes?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** I appreciate the question from this member in particular, who has spoken with me in light of incidents in his own riding and how concerned he is that our government is moving forward in the right direction. I believe that our landmark domestic violence action plan is doing just that.

Particular to these justice issues, where we have to worry that we are seeing stories like this, and we have to be certain that we are responding in kind, let me point to the ODARA tool, a risk assessment tool that is being



piloted now in both North Bay and Ottawa, starting in January of this past year. When we see those tools and the evaluation, we will know that we can roll them out province-wide and we'll determine when we can do that. The model police response is also being analyzed to be certain that it is effective and standardized. In addition, there are a number of police responses and justice responses: the \$2.5 million that we've been putting forward toward the bail hearings. Again, the standardization of how the system responds to these incidents is critical. Those are items that were in our plan, and we are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Brownell:** I know our colleagues will agree that we must do everything in our power to stop this kind of violence from happening. The effects of abuse are devastating and far-reaching. As much as we must try to stop it, we must also look to providing care and support for those who have been victimized by it.

On August 25, I informed the people of my riding of a new action plan initiated by your ministry that would provide investments to agencies that provide services to those who suffer from abuse. More to the point, this investment has been tailored to meet the distinct needs of women of all cultural backgrounds within our communities. Minister, would you expand on this program for us, and explain how women from Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh who have faced abuse will benefit?

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** I am very pleased to say that I know as well that the local member was very happy to see that initially, even in our first budget, we moved to increase the operating budget, for the first time in 12 years, by 3% in those agencies that provide support. One of our more recent announcements was specifically around counselling dollars, and in this area that is so critical—and we know we need to do more—we saw an increase of 10%. There are three tremendous agencies in this member's riding, which I know will use that and help women who have been through this most horrific experience.

We also know that this fall we're launching our first-ever provincial-wide conference called Finding Common Ground. To date, we have blown the doors off on the registration for this conference, where we will see 70 speakers coming together. There are excellent practices across the province in this area dealing with domestic violence, and we want to roll that up and be sure that we have excellence in every region of Ontario.

#### PROVINCIAL DEFICIT

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I have a question to the Acting Premier. Acting Premier, the timing of your economic statement of the day of Justice Gomery's report is very curious. We suspect that you're simply trying to hide behind the skirts of Justice Gomery's report. One suggestion is that you tried to hide the fact that your deficit is actually going to increase. Can you tell us how much greater the deficit will be this year than what you reported last year?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I couldn't disagree with the honourable member more. In fact, we know that the announcement we will make around our economy in Ontario tomorrow is going to be very positive and encouraging for the people in Ontario. We had no way of predicting that there was going to be another key announcement at another level of government that will probably command the airwaves. I will say, with confidence, that I believe the people of Ontario will be very heartened and confident at the end of tomorrow that this government is a good fiscal manager.

**Mr. Hudak:** It's no surprise that the Acting Premier did not answer my question specifically on the deficit, because in fact your own budget papers indicate that your deficit is going to increase from \$1.6 billion to \$2.8 billion in the 2005-06 fiscal year, an 88% increase in your deficit. The reality is that there's no justifiable reason for that. You're allotted \$10 billion in revenue, taken from hard-working taxpayers and businesses in Ontario. I'll ask you again, Acting Premier—taxpayers have to know—please tell us that your deficit is not going to increase.

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** I find it interesting: I'd like to know where your crystal ball is that you would say, or you would present, that you know exactly what's going to be in the statement tomorrow. I have made a commitment to the people in this House today that the economic statement that will be released from this government tomorrow will demonstrate that our government is committed to responsibly managing the tax dollars that come to us from the people of Ontario. We are committed, certainly, to reducing the deficit, the \$5.6-billion deficit that was left to us by the previous government when they said there was none. We arrived, and it was significant.

What I can say to the honourable member is that tomorrow it will demonstrate that we certainly have a handle on dealing with the poor spending practices of your government. In addition to doing that, we have reduced the deficit and seen a climate that has increased jobs in Ontario. This is good news for the people who live here. We look forward to doing that.

#### CHEDOKE LONG-TERM-CARE FACILITY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** My question is to the Acting Premier. Your government closed Hamilton's Chedoke complex continuing care centre and transferred many of the patients to nursing homes. These patients are severely disabled, with multiple complex medical conditions. In fact, at least five of these patients have since passed away, within two months of being transferred out of Chedoke, and the coroner's office is currently investigating these deaths. What are you telling family members who have told you—and in fact have told your minister, who is unfortunately not here to answer the question—their loved ones are not receiving adequate care since being transferred out of that facility?



**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I thank the honourable member for the question. I would say that we're very concerned about the issues that the honourable member has raised. She has indicated that family members have had the opportunity to speak directly with the minister. I have to say that I have not had a conversation with the minister to understand the details or what you're asking of me, but what I can commit to you today is to bring this to the attention of the minister directly, and then he would get back to you on this.

**Ms. Horwath:** In view of the coroner's investigation, and the serious concerns that family members have relayed to the minister, I'd like to take a minute to inform you of the details. The health of their loved ones is deteriorating. They're developing bedsores where they never developed them after 20 years in the previous facility. They're not getting the physical therapy that they need. Their arms and legs are seizing up and their physical abilities are diminishing. They're in facilities that do not accommodate their physical condition. They can't even access the elevator buttons, Acting Premier. The reduced ratio of staff to patient does not meet the medical needs of their complex conditions.

In light of these issues, will you have the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care review and reassess each and every one of the transfers, and will you put a temporary hold on the transfer of the few remaining patients until the coroner's investigation has been completed?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** I would like to thank the honourable member. She obviously is very committed to this issue and to the individuals who have been impacted. I will give her my undertaking today that I will most definitely bring the details of her question to his attention. Certainly, knowing the commitment of the minister, he will respond to her in an appropriate time frame. I thank the member for her question.

1510

### GAMBLING

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** My question is for the Minister of Health Promotion. Gambling is an activity that many responsible adults take part in. For most Ontarians, a night out at the casino—win, lose or draw—is an evening of entertainment. But I want to bring to the minister's attention a 2003 study from Harvard University which showed a troubling risk for developing problem gambling behaviours amongst youth. The study, and similar ones in Ontario, showed that the rate of problem gambling among 18- to 24-year-olds is about 7%—twice the general average.

Minister, what action is being taken to ensure that youth do not develop serious gambling problems?

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I thank the member for Essex for his question. Problem gambling, of course, is a serious problem for a small but significant portion of our society. On Monday, October 24 of this year, the Responsible Gambling Council launched the "friends4friends" peer awareness campaign.

This is a program funded by my ministry. It's a Canadian first, based on extensive research. It showed that peer pressure is one of the most effective ways of reaching the 18- to 24-year-old demographic group.

It's a \$2-million education and prevention campaign which will run between now and March 2006. It includes an interactive Web site, which is friends4friends.ca, which provides young people with the tools they need to help their peers through some troubling times.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** There are lobbies in this building to carry on conversations that are not germane to question period.

The member for Essex.

**Mr. Crozier:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you, Minister. I also wanted to draw your attention, though, to the many adults who are problem gamblers as well. While most individuals can enjoy gambling as a recreational activity, to a small but significant group of people gambling is problematic and does impact negatively on their lives.

Minister, how is your ministry working to prevent all individuals from becoming problem gamblers in the first place?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Before the member replies, the member from Nepean—Carleton would know that he's one of the members of the Legislature and knows where the lobbies are, so perhaps he would sit down.

**Interjection:** His mind is somewhere else.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Mr. Speaker, my friend said, "His mind is somewhere else." I think it's in Ottawa West—Nepean—the honourable member from Nepean—Carleton.

This is a serious issue. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, of course, operates the problem gambling hotline. The number, if I could give it out, is 1-888-230-3505.

The McGuinty government, in fact, provides more funding than any other government in Ontario's history.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Perhaps the NDP thinks this is a joke. Perhaps they think it's a laughing matter when this government is trying to help those people with gambling addictions, particularly when their party brought in gambling in the province of Ontario. So I would suggest they stop laughing and listen to what we're doing on this side of the House.

Our ministry is providing \$9 million in prevention and education strategies as part of the \$36-million problem gambling strategy.

### ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** My question is to the Minister of Government Services. I have repeatedly pointed out in this House the Liberal government's continuing failure to replace the unsafe and inadequate building housing Ontario's archives. Your government cancelled our PC government deal that would have saved



the archives. For more than a year, the government has been promising action. It is now clear that you have no plan; you will take no action.

What are you doing, Minister, to preserve the irreplaceable documents and artifacts that are so important to Ontarians?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** To the member, two things: First, we're taking all the necessary steps in the existing building to both—most importantly, actually—protect the health and safety of the people who work there, but also, obviously, to protect the resources that we have stored there.

Secondly, we have made a commitment to a long-term, new facility. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal is doing the necessary background work to prepare what we call a request for proposal from the community on how we best can replace the archives.

As I said earlier in the House, we are dedicated to a long-term, quality solution for our archives that everyone in the province will be very proud of. That requires the background work. I think in the next few months—I hope in the next few weeks; but I can certainly promise in the next few months—we'll be out publicly to get that proposal.

**Mrs. Munro:** I certainly appreciate the response with regard to the health and safety of the people who work in the archives, but I am very conscious of the fact that the mould and the lack of security and things like that represented such a major investment that it was deemed appropriate by our government to look for a new home. You mentioned that you have started some steps which would see something change, in terms of a new building. I guess the question that so many people would want to know is, when can we expect to see a new home for Ontario's treasures?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** Again, just to add to my answer on the first part: Recognize that we have entered into a relationship with a warehouse where about 80% of our records will be stored. That we've done, and we have moved about 80% of the material into that new building already. So that's done.

The specific question you asked: When we can expect? I said in my answer that we can expect in the next few months—I hope in the next few weeks—to have a request for proposals out publicly so we can find recommendations for various possible solutions.

When will it be finally implemented? Frankly, these things can't happen overnight, so it probably is two or three years before it happens. In the meantime, as I say, 80% of our archives are stored in a warehouse facility. The health and safety of our employees—to the best of our ability, the best way we can preserve the existing archives is taking place in the existing building. But we're probably looking at two to three years before the new archives.

#### PENSION PLAN

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** The question is to the Acting Premier, in the absence of the new

Minister of Finance. Acting Premier, I wanted to ask you a question about the participating Co-operatives of Ontario's trustee pension plan.

Over two years ago, the 2,300 members of the plan had very modest pension benefits averaging less than \$700 a month cut in half to \$350 a month, through no fault of their own. On May 24, 2005, the superintendent of pensions at FSCO, K. David Gordon, notified the members of the plan that FSCO had reached a preliminary decision that the 50% reduction in benefits for the retired members of the plan contravened the plan bylaws and was invalid. Since then, however, there's been delay after delay after delay in implementing the decision. The latest is an extension of the appeal process until January 25, 2006.

Minister, will you do justice to the members of the plan and put a stop to the endless delays?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** First of all, I'd like to thank the honourable member for the question. This is an issue that I hear about in my own riding as well.

What I can indicate to the honourable member today is that I will bring this request to his attention, and I'm sure that when it is appropriate, he will act as he sees fit and in the best interests of all of the people of Ontario. But I believe that this is something that all members of this House have received some information on.

That the appeal process has been extended, I think, would suggest that there continues to be some opportunity for folks who are not happy with the decision to make that known.

1520

**Ms. Horwath:** Acting Premier, you're quite correct: These members of this plan are in every single one of our ridings. But unfortunately, FSCO, the government's pension regulator, was partly responsible for the very fiasco that you've all heard about through the presentations and the documents they're providing to us. They had ample warning of the problems of the plan but did nothing about it. Now, they seem to be stalling again and again in the implementation of the decision that came down earlier this year. Unfortunately, the people who are suffering are those pensioners who worked very hard all their lives for their pensions.

Acting Premier, I ask you again: Will you do justice to the members of the plan and put a stop to the endless delays and just enforce the decision that was brought down on May 24, 2005?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** What I will do is what I indicated to the honourable member when I answered her first question, and that is to bring this to the attention of the minister.

#### MANDATORY RETIREMENT

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** My question today is for the Minister of Labour. Our government is implementing an aggressive legislative agenda that will change the face of the province for the better. Last week,



you introduced second reading of Bill 211, a bill that, if passed, will prohibit mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario, ending decades of discrimination against older but still so very competent workers. I know that many applaud this initiative, understanding that mandatory retirement undermines the dignity and sense of self-worth of older workers. However, I also know that there are concerns and, at times, a lack of understanding of the bill's true intent.

Minister, can you clarify why the government is introducing legislation to end mandatory retirement and to reassure the fine people of this province that this is long overdue and it is the right thing to do?

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** As you know, this legislation, if passed, will amend the human rights act by amending the definition of "age."

This is about choice. This is about ending a culture of discrimination that exists in this province, a culture that has existed for far too long. When somebody turns 65, they don't suddenly lose the skills they had, the determination they had, the drive they had. Many of these individuals still have a great deal to contribute to society. So we're certainly conscious of that.

We want to give people the right to retire; we don't want to force people to retire. That's why I would urge every member of this House to support Bill 211: because it's about choice. It's the right thing to do.

## PETITIONS

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I have a petition here for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I want to thank Paul Melcher, Dave Markus and Rick Krieger for visiting me in my office to give me this petition and bring this matter to my attention. Rick Krieger is a client with Community Living in Upper Ottawa Valley.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

"Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that

they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I support this petition. I affix my name to it and pass it to Jeffrey for you, Speaker.

## DIABETES TREATMENT

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):**

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We are requesting that all diabetic supplies, especially and including insulin infusion pumps and the supplies to maintain them, as prescribed by an endocrinologist or medical doctor, be covered under the Ontario health insurance plan.

"Diabetes costs Canadian taxpayers \$13 billion a year and increasing! It is the leading cause of death and hospitalization in Canada. Many people with diabetes cannot afford the ongoing expense of managing" the disease. "They cut corners to save money. They rip test strips in half, cut down on the number of times they test their blood, and even reuse lancets and needles. These cost-saving measures have tumultuous and disastrous health consequences.

"Persons with diabetes need and deserve financial assistance to cope with the escalating costs of managing diabetes. We think it is in all Ontarians' and the government's best interest to support diabetics with the supplies that each individual needs to obtain optimum glucose control. Good blood glucose control reduces or eliminates kidney failure by 50%, blindness by 76%, nerve damage by 60%, cardiac disease by 35% and even amputations.

"Just think of how many dollars can be saved by the Ministry of Health if diabetics had a chance to gain optimum glucose control."

I agree with this petition. Almost 4,000 have signed this petition, and I want to affix my signature to it too.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I have a petition from my riding of Durham to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 137 introduced by Durham MPP John O'Toole has received second reading in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and

"Whereas Bill 137 would support public transit by allowing transit users to obtain a non-refundable income tax credit for up to 50% of expenses that they incur and pay for using public transit; and

"Whereas this tax credit would be a valuable incentive to support the use of public transit; and

"Whereas public transit would reduce greenhouse gas emissions, ease gridlock, reduce rush hours and generally improve the quality of life in Ontario communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, urge the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support Bill 137 so that more

Ontarians are encouraged to make public transit a part of their daily commute and part of their everyday routine.”

I'm pleased to support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham, and present it to Trevor, one of the pages here in the Legislative Assembly.

### COMMUNITY CENTRE

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the Warden corridor in the heart of Scarborough Southwest is going through a major redevelopment with industrial land being converted for residential use;

“Whereas the residents of the surrounding community want to ensure that there are enough community supports to ensure that community needs for recreation are met;

“Whereas a community centre, located in the heart of the Warden corridor, would go a long way to ensuring that these community supports are met;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to work in conjunction with the city of Toronto in providing the necessary funds to help construct this community centre as an example of the government's commitment to build strong communities in urban centres.”

I agree with this petition and affix my signature to it.

### MACULAR DEGENERATION

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration ... there are other forms of macular degeneration ... that are not covered.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration, resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment cost for this disease is astronomical for most constituents and adds a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program.”

I also sign this petition.

### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that comes to me from people in Kawartha Lakes and reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty, MPP, as leader of the official opposition made the following commitment: ‘I

have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city’; and

“Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: ‘Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?’; and

“Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative; and

“Whereas the council of the city of Kawartha Lakes has demanded that the province of Ontario honour the results of the 2003 election as it pertains to the minister's question;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to honour the commitment made by Dalton McGuinty and to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question.”

I agree with the petitioners. I have affixed my signature to this.

1530

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition here for which I'd like to thank Sonny Sansone in Scarborough Southwest. It's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and I join with my colleague the member from Scarborough West in submitting it. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Scarborough Southwest is a growing community dependent on public transit to move people around;

“Whereas the city of Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission are calling for and predicting continued growth in Scarborough Southwest over the next 25 years;

“Whereas the Toronto Transit Commission, in its growth plan, has called for the expansion of subway service to cover more of Scarborough;

“Whereas the government of Ontario has traditionally assisted the city of Toronto in funding subway expansion as recently as the Sheppard subway expansion project;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to work in concert with the city of Toronto and come up with a funding arrangement to assist in expanding subway service to Scarborough.”

I'm a continuous user of the TTC, I support this petition, I affix my signature and ask page Austin to carry it.

### ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** I have a petition regarding the Adoption Information Disclosure Act.



"Whereas Bill 183, the Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005, is currently before the Ontario Legislature and, if passed into law, will give unqualified retroactive access to adoption records, regardless of the wishes of the adoptee or birth parent, which were previously understood to be sealed in perpetuity;

"Whereas the Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, along with every other information and privacy commissioner in Canada, members of the legal community and many MPPs, have expressed great concern about Bill 183 as presently drafted and have called upon the government to amend it to include a disclosure veto provision and protect the legitimate privacy rights of thousands of Ontarians;

"Whereas the right to file a disclosure veto would introduce the element of consent for birth parents and adoptees, allowing them the same choice afforded to every other birth parent and adoptee in Canada, that being, whether or not they wish to disclose their personal identifying information, without having to plead their case before a tribunal and justify their reasons for maintaining their privacy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Not to pass Bill 183 into law without the provision of an automatic disclosure veto."

I will sign that.

#### IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale):** This petition was collected by Sonny Sansone from Scarborough.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas new immigrants to this province have professional designations in a wide variety of areas;

"Whereas the barriers that exist to have these designations recognized in Ontario are extremely unfair;

"Whereas these barriers force many skilled immigrants to take up jobs that barely pay minimum wage and make it hard for these people to make ends meet;

"Whereas shortages in various professional vocations such as doctors can easily be addressed if these barriers are revised;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the government to come up with a plan to address the problem of underused skills among immigrants with professional designations."

I support this petition. I put my signature on this one as well.

#### ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 183, the Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005, is currently before the Ontario Legislature and, if passed into law, will give unqualified retroactive access to adoption records, regardless of the

wishes of the adoptee or birth parent, which were previously understood to be sealed in perpetuity;

"Whereas the Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, along with every other Information and Privacy Commissioner in Canada, members of the legal community and many MPPs, have expressed great concern about Bill 183 as presently drafted and have called upon the government to amend it to include a disclosure veto provision and protect the legitimate privacy rights of thousands of Ontarians;

"Whereas the right to file a disclosure veto would introduce the element of consent for birth parents and adoptees, allowing them the same choice afforded to every other birth parent and adoptee in Canada, that being, whether or not they wish to disclose their personal identifying information, without having to plead their case before a tribunal and justify their reasons for maintaining their privacy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Not to pass Bill 183 into law without the provision of an automatic disclosure veto."

I support this petition and I sign it, and I send it to the table with Alexandra.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### BUDGET MEASURES ACT, 2005

##### LOI DE 2005

##### SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 25, 2005, on the motion for second reading of Bill 197, An Act to implement Budget measures / Projet de loi 197, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures budgétaires.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** On the last occasion, after having exhausted some 52 minutes, I ran out of time. I have 8 minutes left, and I'd just like to go back to where I was. I was talking about the environment; I was talking about the cutbacks to the environmental program, and the detrimental effect they have had in Ontario. I talked about the water in Kashechewan, because that was the day that the news broke, and I talked about the lack of government plans around that and how the water degradation in that particular community had caused irreparable harm to the people who lived there.

I went on to talk about the water degradation closer to home as well, at Lake Simcoe. Many of us in this Legislature had an opportunity to meet with the Ladies of the Lake. I talked about the calendar, and how they're trying to get some money together to try to stop the degradation of what is arguably Ontario's best-used water resource in terms of boating, recreation, fishing and swimming, and that the people all around southern



Ontario, particularly in the GTA, look to Lake Simcoe as a place for recreation, and how, in fact, ordinary citizens are having to do extraordinary things to try to protect the environment, because there simply isn't enough money in this government's coffers to do so.

Then my time ran out. Just as it ran out, I was about to get on to the issue that is grabbing a lot of headlines in the last couple of weeks, and that is the issue of the big pipe that is being put forward for the communities north of Toronto. The city of Toronto certainly has weighed in; the city of Toronto has passed a motion asking this Legislature and the minister to stop the big pipe. They have talked about the degradation of the land and the aquifer of the Oak Ridges moraine. They've talked about the potential health hazards, should anything go wrong with this big pipe as the water is transferred from the area north of Toronto through the various pipes to end up in Pickering.

They are quite right in their assessment of what this big pipe is all about. To date, in the construction that has taken place, 30 billion litres of water have been taken out of the ground in the aquifer of the Oak Ridges moraine—30 billion litres of water, which is not likely to be replaced in the short term. If this continues, another 60 billion litres of water will be taken out of that aquifer. To put that in context, what is happening each and every day since the time that the construction has been undertaken until the time, should the big pipe be completed—it amounts to 71 million litres. The average backyard pool, for people who have a swimming pool, just to put this in context, has between 15,000 and 20,000 litres of water. This is 71 billion litres taken out of the groundwater in the Oak Ridges moraine, probably never to be replaced.

1540

When that water table goes down, when that water is gone, what happens? We're already starting to see it happen. First of all the wells go dry, and in York region 120 wells to date have gone dry, wells that have been in some of the locations for a century, wells that provided water for cattle and farms, wells that provided water for people to drink. They have simply dried up because the groundwater has sunk so low. Farmers are losing their groundwater, so it's becoming increasingly difficult and more expensive to get water to cattle.

We have seen what is happening in Rouge Park; the minister stood up today talking about the Rouge again, and he was talking about Rouge Park. The trout streams that go all through Rouge Park, the trout streams where I used to fish occasionally as a boy, have gone dry; they have gone stagnant. The trout that the Ministry of Natural Resources put in them are starting to die off. So I wonder, when the trout streams start to go dry, doesn't anybody twig to what's happening? You might say it was kind of a wet summer, but the groundwater itself is what is to blame. It's simply not there.

All of this has happened while this government seems to be frozen. It seems to have inertia when it comes to the environment. Of all of the ministries to cut back, this was one of them, where the money was taken away in the last

budget. I am shocked a little, because it doesn't take very long to see how the environment is affected. It doesn't take long to see the pollution, the degradation. It doesn't take long to see what happens in Kashechewan. It doesn't take long to see what's happening around Lake Simcoe or, more recently, what will happen if the big pipe is not stopped. There are simply not enough resources in the environment department to cut them back. There is not sufficient staff to monitor what is going on by cutting back even more. There are not sufficient monies to hire expertise to simply cut it back again. This budget did that to the environment branch, along with several others, and it is not something of which this government should be proud.

In the few minutes remaining: On the last occasion I talked about the failure of Bill 197 to address the real needs of Ontario. I talked about how it took six months to get that bill before this Legislature, and the failure has manifested itself in, oh, so many ways: The hospitals that needed some 7% only got 4.7%, and we have seen hospitals in the last two weeks talking about cutting back their staff and their essential services, and in some cases even their emergency departments. We have seen the mistakes the government made trying to bail themselves out by making secret deals on P3 hospitals. We have seen the Ministries of the Environment, Culture, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Northern Development all with reduced budgets and the real, detrimental impact.

But I have to tell you that the biggest impact, the biggest detriment to all the people of this province, really has to be among those who are our poorest citizens. If you look at what has happened in terms of the claw-back—and I heard one of the ministers responding today about putting \$8 million into a food program at schools. That pales in comparison to the money that you are clawing back from the poorest children in this province. If you give them \$8 million to eat in school, you have to know that you are taking 50 or 100 times that out of their mouths every single year. It does not make sense to me to claw that money back, and this government continues to do it. It does not make sense to me for this government to have promised to build so many housing units and to have failed to deliver, or, in the alternative, to have offered money for rent supplements, and only 400 rent supplements are currently being given in this entire province. It is unconscionable to talk about the poorest of the poor on Ontario Works or ODSP and in this budget give them not one cent of extra increase. They are people who are actually worse off today than they were in the worst times of Mike Harris, and this government ought not to be proud of that.

On the last occasion, I talked about child care. I talked about autism, how you're taking people with autistic children to court to fight them as they struggle to do the best for their families. I talked about native affairs.

Mr. Speaker, my time is just about up, but I have to tell you, in the six months since this budget was introduced, things have gotten even worse.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?



**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham–Kent Essex):** I'm pleased to rise and make some comments about our budget that was held in recent days.

For the rural community, it's important for them to know, particularly our farmers, that in our budget, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's base budget actually increased. I know there was some conversation back at the time as to whether that was the case or not, but the OMAF budget actually increased by \$15 million in 2005-06, so there are many more dollars there: some \$564 million with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. We know that our farmers are going through some difficult times. Many of my colleagues and the Minister of Agriculture have met with them in recent days, and I'm certain that we are going to move forward to address their problems in the future.

As well, this budget made the largest and most significant investment over a multi-year period in 40 years—it is the largest investment in 40 years—for post-secondary education, which will result in new jobs and economic growth. It will help universities in my region, such as Windsor and Western. It will certainly assist colleges such as St. Clair, Lambton and Fanshawe colleges. At \$6.2 billion, it's a significant part of our budget initiative. We know that a well-educated province will move us forward into the new economies as they change and evolve over time—and most certainly they will, these economies of the world. Part of that initiative will increase financial aid for some 135,000 low- and middle-income students, giving them a chance to contribute in their education, and therefore to the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I'm pleased to add some comments to the speech by the member from Beaches–East York, and I would like to say that he gave an excellent hour-long speech and it was very thoughtful. Of course, I may not necessarily agree with everything he said, his perspective, but I do respect that he spent a lot of time thinking about what he was saying. I had the pleasure of sharing a flight, a trip with the committee to the north last year, with the member from Beaches–East York, and we visited a number of the northern communities, including Attawapiskat, quite close by the Kashechewan area.

I have to say that today, when I asked a question of the Minister of Natural Resources to do with the situation in Kashechewan, I was quite surprised to learn that the minister was not aware of the 1992 agreement between the provincial government and the federal government, the emergency preparedness agreement. In fact, he said today, in answer to a question in question period, that it wasn't until last Tuesday that he discovered that he was responsible for declaring an emergency on the First Nation. I'm very surprised by that. I would have thought someone in the Ministry of Natural Resources would have let the minister know that that was the government's responsibility, or that perhaps the past minister responsible for aboriginal affairs—Michael Bryant, the Attorney General, who was responsible for the past year and a half—maybe would have briefed the current minister that

that was part of his responsibilities. It demonstrates how First Nations' concerns are not paid attention to. They are real concerns, and they so often just fall through the cracks.

I only have 15 seconds, so I can't go into great detail, but I would like to compliment the member from Beaches–East York on his speech. It was certainly very carefully thought out.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** I congratulate my friend from Beaches–East York; he covered a lot of ground. He talked about housing, which is a theme that I will speak to in approximately an hour from now. You'll recall, as he reminded us, that the Liberals—

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** A little advertisement.

1550

**Mr. Marchese:** Please tune in. Stick around.

You will recall that the Liberals promised that thousands and thousands of units would be built for people who have an affordability problem to get into some modest housing. That was an electoral promise, a campaign promise they made. They get into government, and two years later, how many units have they built, by their own record? Sixty three. The minister of infrastructure stands up and he blah, blah, blahs about so many things, but by their own record, the data that we have seen that they have shown us—63 units.

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** The shovels are in the ground.

**Mr. Marchese:** Members behind me who will speak after me might say, "The shovels are in the ground." I see only 63 units of all of the promises they made of all the thousands of units that would be built.

Oh, yes, the Liberals really care. They care as much about housing as they do about ending the clawback of the national child care benefits that would go and flow directly to women. The government said, "We would end that clawback, because we care." They get into government, and they don't do anything.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** Oh, for God's sake.

**Mr. Marchese:** Oh, but it's true. You might deny it all you want. Not one cent. That clawback is not ended. They didn't do what they promised. As a result of that, \$300 million, which would otherwise be going to people who need it, is not going anywhere. I thank the member for bringing that to our attention, and I will repeat it an hour from now.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** The 2005 budget is a great budget. It is taking care of the needs that we have today and positioning Ontario for a bright future tomorrow.

I'll go along the vein of the member for Trinity–Spadina and talk a little bit about infrastructure that we're building.

Hospitals: I could say that in my community we are rebuilding the Trillium hospital—it looks great; it's addressing community needs—and the Credit Valley Hospital.



Highways: 401, 403, 404, 410, the QEW. There is construction going on around this province. Infrastructure is getting built.

We are taking care of our water systems, pipes, sewers; making sure that we have the infrastructure to build a strong economy.

But our strong economy is not going to be built on just infrastructure, on bricks and mortar; our strong economy, through this budget, is going to be built on our people. That's why we're investing so much in education: \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education—unprecedented in 40 years—making sure that we have those engineers to build those bridges, those buildings and those roads; making sure that we have those doctors, nurses, pediatricians to take care of our kids; making sure that we have professionals so that we are positioned Ontario as a knowledge-based economy.

That's why companies like Toyota are coming here and investing hundreds of millions of dollars in Ontario, because we have the infrastructure, but more so because we have a great workforce with terrific universal health care, great education and investments in our environment. Ontario is positioned for a prosperous future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Beaches—East York has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Prue:** I'd like to thank my four colleagues for their comments. To the member from Chatham—Kent—Essex: He talked about the students, and I would say any time you build a school, any time you put teachers or professors into it, any time a child learns, it has to be a good thing. But it is impossible for poor students to learn when they don't have enough money for food, when they are dressed in shabby clothes and when they simply don't belong.

The Minister of Children and Youth Services said as much, and I talked about that in my speech. I think what she said was far more eloquent than what I could have.

For the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka: Yes, we did go on a trip to the north, and the reason we went on that trip—and I think the government members opposite need to think about this—was that we were there for a private member's bill for revenue sharing for the communities in the north and the money that they so desperately need to build their own infrastructure. What happened to that bill? It died on the order paper. It didn't need to, but there was no stomach in the government ranks, when it came to negotiation, whether that bill continued to survive. It has not, and our communities in northern Ontario desperately need that money.

My colleague from Trinity—Spadina talked about the reality: Only 63 housing units have been built. Of those 5,000 that I heard of—mutterings from the rump—that are in the works, most are not affordable.

The member from Mississauga East talked about this being a great budget. I would tell you that it's a great budget if you are not poor. It's a great budget if you are not on ODSP or welfare. It's a great budget if you are not a poor child who has his or her money clawed back and doesn't have food or decent clothing. It is not a great

budget if you rely on the government in any way for a better Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London—Fanshawe):** I'm honoured to stand up and speak in support of the budget of 2005. Before I start, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that I'm sharing my time with my colleague from Mississauga West.

It's a great budget regardless of what anybody says. When you go on the grounds, visiting colleges and universities—schools—you notice that it's a great budget, because our government in this budget talks about great investment in post-secondary education. My colleague before me spoke about it: a \$6.2-billion investment in post-secondary education.

I had the chance last Friday to go to Fanshawe College with my colleague Minister Bentley. We talked about our investment in that college. It was a huge ceremony. The president and many different departments in that college came to thank us for the investment our government is making in that college to complete the trade centre, which they've been working on for a long, long time. This is our investment showing in the colleges.

One the same day, I also got the chance to go to the University of Western Ontario to see another investment. The research and innovation ministry is investing a lot of money in research, more than \$7 million. Our government is putting a lot of attention into post-secondary education, investing for the future. As you know, the future is about technology; the future is about research. That's why our government paid attention to those details, because we want to make a good future for our province.

In kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools our investments are great. When you visit the schools, the principals and teachers tell you about their relaxation, talk to you about their happiness, talk to you about the good working relationship between the government and them. For the first time in a long time, those institutions are working well with the government, because we believe in education. We're investing in education. When we invest in education, it means we're investing in the future of this province.

We also invested more in child care spaces in Ontario. Everybody heard, people heard me say today, that in the summertime, in August, there was a great announcement, a joint announcement, between the province and the federal government of an almost \$1-billion investment in child care for more spaces, care providers and building more institutions to absorb the need for child care spaces in Ontario. All these elements are because of our budget, because we believe in the future of this province. We believe in reinvesting in our people in many different ways.

Health care is also a great element of our budget. It takes a lot of money. Our minister put a lot of investment in this area. Our health care has improved, regardless of what anybody says, regardless of the people from the other side who always talk about the lack of investment in health care.



1600

I want to tell you that last Friday a gentleman from my constituency, London–Fanshawe, walked into my office. He gave me permission to mention his name: Richard Thomas, who lives in London–Fanshawe. He was telling me that our health care has improved big time. He went to the hospital emergency department in August and got evaluated for his hip replacement. By October 13 they operated on him, and by October 28 he walked into my office. He felt a lot better. He thanks our government, thanks us for all the investment, thanks the hospital, thanks the doctor who operated on him. This is a good indication that our investment in health care is working. Lowering the wait time is working. We're going to continue to invest in health care because we believe that health care investment is going to go far in protecting our people and our future in this area.

Besides that, everybody is talking about the infrastructure. We invested more than ever in infrastructure by rebuilding highways, bridges and affordable housing. More than \$5 million of this infrastructure money went to complete many hospital projects across Ontario, two of them in London, in my riding: one for St. Joseph's hospital and another for the London Health Sciences Centre. People in that riding appreciate the government's effort to support them, to strengthen the ability to continue servicing the community.

With all this work, with all this investment, we haven't forgotten our deficit, which we inherited from the past government. We are working toward eliminating that deficit, and hopefully tomorrow you are going to hear good news from the minister about our progress on the economic front, because we also believe not just in investing in education and health care, but also that the strength of the economy is very important in giving us the ability to continue investing in education, investing in health care and investing in infrastructure.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** Earlier this afternoon I had the opportunity to introduce the dean of the faculty of business administration at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, where I graduated with my own MBA in the late 1980s. Let me take just a moment to urge all the SFU MBA grads in the GTA to come out and attend SFU's 40th-anniversary breakfast for grads tomorrow morning at 7:30 at the National Club on Bay Street.

Ontario's annual budget is where we count what's countable and we measure what truly counts against our goals as a government. We compare our results to what matters to Ontario's working families, and those results are solid and impressive.

Our fellow Canadians in Alberta are building their future on the natural resources in the Athabasca tar sands, which now rank as one of the world's best oil reserves. Here in Ontario we've historically built our future on the natural resources in the brains, the work ethic and the pride of our talented people and in the creativity that they possess, and they're the best in the land. It's that wealth

of talent, drive and brainpower that Ontario's 2005-06 budget supports, fosters and celebrates. Post-secondary education builds the talent pool of tomorrow's managers, entrepreneurs, professionals, scientists and risk-takers. That's why Ontario has said that post-secondary education is our key to the future. That's why Ontario stepped up with an historic \$6.2-billion infusion in post-secondary education, the largest multi-year investment in 40 years.

Bill 197 implements this and other strong, forward-looking budget measures, all the leading-edge businesses that governments seek out and try to foster to add value not only from the sweat of physical work but from the inspiration and creativity of knowledge work.

Ontario is a leader in aerospace, pharmaceuticals, software, biotechnology, semiconductor technology and basic research. The reason Ontario continues to lead the world in so many areas—areas that are profitable, areas that create careers, build homes, support families and sustain businesses and services—is because Ontario has the natural resource that all the world needs and wants. That natural resource is smart people.

We had lost our way between 1990 and 2003. Our universities, community colleges and other post-secondary institutions had slipped into neglect. Our alumni and students were forced to pick up the difference in donations and soaring tuition fees.

This government understands that the farm system for the best brains in Ontario exists in our post-secondary education system. This 2005-06 budget changes that neglect. Ontario's 2005-06 budget, and Bill 197 which implements it, allow leading companies like Microsoft to hire Ontario computer science graduates like Mohammed Samji and Leon Wong, both Ontarians, who are now leading the development of Windows Vista, which is in beta, for Microsoft Corp. In the software business, a computer science degree from the University of Waterloo has an equivalent cachet value to a Harvard MBA in the investment banking trade.

This historic budget makes OSAP funds more widely available. This forward-thinking budget makes outright grants to low-income students more widely available. This higher education budget means that access to post-secondary education is about what's in your head as a student and not what's in your parents' bank account.

Our smart people have always driven Ontario's prosperity. When our province took post-secondary education for granted, we saw our knowledge-intensive competitive advantage slip. This budget turns that sad situation around.

Moreover, Ontario's budget deficit continues to come down as we approach a sustainably balanced budget, and what pleases Ontarians most is that our deficit is coming down sustainably. That means Ontarians can expect their government to bring Ontario's debt down without fire sales of our highways and other public assets.

Ontario's 2005-06 budget implements an important and historic series of commitments. Our government thanks the member from Vaughan–King–Aurora for his



leadership and vision in shaping it. I look forward to its quick passage.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Marchese:** I'll have an opportunity to speak in about half an hour or so, so I will leave much of my comment to then.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** Here we go. A little advertisement: the Rosario Marchese show.

**Mr. Marchese:** I know that the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is looking forward to it, and that's why she's here.

To hear the member from London-Fanshawe speak, you would think that they are the only government that has ever invested so much in infrastructure. Those superlatives make you worry, and I'll tell you why. When the Tories were in government, they used to say the same thing. He wasn't here to remember the language, so he doesn't understand that when he uses those superlatives, it's somewhat elusive, somewhat exaggerated. Had he been here, he would have witnessed the slashing of the Conservative government as they were saying, "We have invested more than any other government in the history of this Legislature." That's the kind of stuff they would say, and everything they would do was "historic," similar to what the member from Mississauga West says, that this is an historical budget. How could you say of a little budget that makes some investment in post-secondary education that it's historic?

It's no different, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, than the previous government. So you've got to understand: Whenever you hear the exaggeration, you've got to worry. It means there is less to it than the claim. Only the claim is inflated; everything else is hollow and small and enough for people like me and you to worry about.

As soon as I have my opportunity, I will be able to make a couple of comments—

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** We're waiting with bated breath.

**Mr. Marchese:** —for which the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is waiting with bated breath. I look forward to that as much as she does.

**Mr. Duguid:** I want to commend the members for Mississauga West and London-Fanshawe for two excellent speeches on the budget. They recognize the importance of this budget in terms of preparing Ontario for our future. They recognize the important investments: The investments in our young people, investments in our school system, investments in our post-secondary education system.

1610

But the member for Trinity-Spadina really got me going here the last couple of times he's gotten up. He gets us going a lot; he's good at doing that. I've got to tell you, when he talks about our housing commitments as being trivial, it tells me he knows not what he is speaking of. Some 5,250 units is what we'll be bringing on-line, in partnership with the federal government. We're fulfilling our commitment to match every dollar

that the federal government is putting into housing—something that's a very significant commitment. It's not being done overnight; of course not. It takes time to put these projects together. I'm sure the member knows it; I'm sure the member recognizes it. It takes time to do that. But 5,000 housing allowances going out to residents, because we've got an increasing vacancy rate out there, which means there are units available but not to the people who need them. That's why we're going to bat for those people: to make sure that we can get them those housing allowances. I appreciate that members of the opposition have to try to find the negative in everything we're doing, but surely the member recognizes that those are significant commitments that are going to make a big, big difference in the future for a number of people living not only in Toronto but right across the province.

Then he talks about a \$6-billion investment in education as being trivial. I find that absolutely absurd. I think the member next to me here from Mississauga West pointed out that that's about the size of the deficits that they ran when they were in government, so maybe he does think it's trivial.

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I want to just comment on the member from London-Fanshawe, who gave a rather lengthy oration about expansion of colleges and universities. If he wanted to be more accurate, he could have said that the openings that he attended with such great fanfare were capital expansions approved by the previous government. The funding was begun by the previous government. It was a multi-year commitment which our government honoured and which his government is having a hard time honouring. The fact of the matter is, if you look at the headlines in my paper, the Burlington Post, of the last week, "Funding Crisis at Joe Brant Hospital" and "Fiscal Uncertainty at School Board Reaches Boiling Point," we've got one trustee saying that the board is on the verge of a bankruptcy.

The fact of the matter is, in the last two years the Liberals have been really good at getting in front of the camera and at the end of the ribbon, cutting it to open the doors to buildings that were funded and approved by the previous government. In hospital expansion alone in this province, the restructuring commission looked at a considerable number—all the hospitals, for that matter, in the GTA—and put together expansion plans. Where has your minister been on this? We cross-examined him a couple of weeks ago and he cannot give us the schedule of commitments for dollars.

There have been three hospitals in the GTA where the government has said, "Yes, we'll apply some expansion funding." There are 19 hospitals in the GTA; you have announced three for expansion. You're behind schedule. Yet the member opposite is up there in this budget debate giving his government credit. You are behind the previous government's schedule for expansion, and you should be ashamed of yourselves for that. You should be committing those dollars to capital funding and fixing the hospital situation in Ontario as soon as possible.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I'm pleased to rise and take part in this debate as well this afternoon. I



listened to the two speakers from the government's side promoting their bill. However, I think what you should be doing more of being out in the communities more, particularly in rural Ontario, and spending more time in the business community. I can tell you that I work a lot with our chamber of commerce and I work a lot with our agricultural community. I talked to a member from the Dairy Farmers of Ontario just this morning, and I can tell you they're a very disillusioned and very disappointed group of individuals. They see their businesses sliding away. They see this government returning to the lost decade. We all know what the lost decade was: the five years of Peterson and then of Bob Rae, when this province basically came to a standstill. We actually lost jobs in that period. Now, we're seeing this new government—after two years of bragging and thinking they're going to do fantastic things, we actually see a very disillusioned business community. They feel that the government does not support them in any way.

That's the problem: There are no supports for the business community; they don't feel wanted in Ontario. That's why, every day, you're seeing so many jobs leave this province, and the Minister of Economic Development goes back to one announcement every time. In fact, there are literally thousands of jobs leaving this province every week.

I just want to re-emphasize that they can brag about their budget measures, they can brag about their tax increases and the \$10 billion more they have in revenue, but the fact of the matter is that there's a disillusioned business community out there, and particularly the agriculture community.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for London—Fanshawe, two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Ramal:** I just want to thank everyone who has spoken and commented on my speech, and my colleague's speech too.

I'm proud to support this budget because it's a great budget; I will repeat it again. Regardless of what the member from Trinity—Spadina is talking about, it is a historical budget, especially in post-secondary education. It's the first time in 40 years: \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education, an investment for the future of this province. It's a very important investment.

I also want to talk about the member from Burlington, when he was talking about this budget, how our government is not doing enough. I want to tell you, I wish he had been with me Friday in the presence of a past Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Dianne Cunningham. She was listening, and she agreed with what we are doing. This was a past minister for the past government. She was there, and she agreed that we are doing a great job toward enhancing the colleges and universities.

In terms of our investment in hospitals, I agree with the member from Burlington. Before the election, they went across the province and they promised so many hospitals. They promised money for all the hospitals in the province of Ontario. They promised to open hospital

in every corner of the province of Ontario. But where's the money? Nothing, zero, zilch, NSF cheques. This is what London Health Sciences Centre said; this is what St. Joseph's said. They waited for us, with our support, with our infrastructure plan. We are completing London Health Sciences Centre; we are completing St. Joseph's hospital, because we believe in the health of those people who supported us, who told us that we need to change. That change is coming. I know the opposite side doesn't want to agree with us, but this is a reality. This is a reality when you walk through the schools, talking to the board of trustees, when you talk to the colleges, when you talk to the universities—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Further debate? The member for Erie—Lincoln.

**Interjection:** Oh, this should be a good speech.

**Interjection:** Yes.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** Thank you, member for Nepean—Carleton—very kind. And Scarborough, thank you.

I'm very pleased to rise and offer some comment on Bill 197, probably the first of an expected three or maybe more budget bills emanating from the April 2005 budget by then finance minister Greg Sorbara.

Before we get into the particular details on Bill 197, I think it's important to put the entire context of the state of the province's finances and the state of the provincial economy on the table first, and then it's best to understand the context of Bill 197, if there are any worthy measures in here that will help, quite frankly, working families, seniors and young people, who find it increasingly difficult to make ends meet in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Secondly, are there initiatives in here to help an Ontario economy that continues to fall behind not only our peer states, those that we compete with for jobs and investment but, sadly, now is falling behind the average of Canada's provinces in far too many economic indicators?

I think all of us in the assembly have grown up in a province of Ontario that led Canada, that was always the engine of growth. It was a great source of pride to be an Ontarian and to help lead Canada: the last province into a recession and the first province to pull the rest of the country out of recession. But I do fear with some of the economic indicators that we're seeing, some of the reports coming from the banks, the Conference Board of Canada and such, that Ontario's machine has become considerably tarnished, and I don't see much grease, much oil in this budget to help us turn around the state of Ontario's economy.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we had stood down the lead, and there should be 60 minutes on the clock.

1620

**The Deputy Speaker:** Kindly stop the clock for a second while we determine that. Was the official opposition's lead stood down, and therefore should this be an hour? It is? OK. So we'll see that you get that.

**Mr. Hudak:** Thank you very much for your assistance, Mr. Speaker.



I think it's important to put Bill 197 into that larger context of the challenges that working families, seniors and young people face on a daily basis in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario and the challenges faced by small business—in fact, all businesses—in a crisis of confidence about where the Ontario economy is going in the future, which may cause these companies to reconsider investment in expansion plans in the province of Ontario; certainly some worrisome trends out there that this assembly needs to address.

Importantly, too, I think as a highlight we also need to remind ourselves of what exactly Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals promised in the last campaign on the finances, on the fiscal issues. After all, if you find that somebody routinely breaks their promises, one wonders if what's written in Bill 197 will actually see the light of day or if they're just more broken promises for short-term political gain.

One of the highlight promises that Dalton McGuinty made during the 2003 campaign was to balance the budget every year. Whether it was during debates, whether he was on the stump, whether he was looking into TV cameras, Dalton McGuinty promised that he would balance the budget every year. This is actually like a running broken promise, and we all know that that promise basically went out the window as soon as Dalton McGuinty had the keys to the Premier's limousine. Then, if I recall correctly, Premier McGuinty said, "OK, I've broken that promise, but then we will get back to balanced budgets, and in fact I think I committed to balance the budget before the next election." Then lo and behold, the member from Mississauga will remember, under the finance minister's first budget that promise got broken once again, when they said they wouldn't balance the budget, I think, until the 2008-09 fiscal year.

So it is hard, I say to my friend from Northumberland, to keep track of all the broken promises, but I think I'm relatively accurate here in saying that—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** He's disagreeing with me, but I think I'm correct in saying that this promise has clearly been broken and then it morphed into sort of half-promises that have also been broken subsequently in the past two years by Dalton McGuinty or his finance minister. The reality now is, despite a campaign promise to balance the budget each and every year, the McGuinty government plans to run deficits for at least five years in a row, adding approximately \$13.8 billion to the provincial debt in that time.

Interestingly, as well, to give them cover on this broken promise, the Liberal government repealed the balanced budget act, an act to ensure the budgets were balanced each and every year, and if they weren't, there would be financial penalties ascribed to the ministers involved around the cabinet table who failed to balance the books. We now know that that act has been scrapped by the McGuinty government so they can run deficits year in and year out without any fear that cabinet ministers would have their pay docked. I think people liked

the notion of the balanced budget act that politicians were required to put their money where their mouths were, so to speak, so that if the cabinet ran a deficit, they would be required to pay a fine back to the provincial treasury. Now, that protection is gone and, as a result, the barn door has been opened and we are having what appears to be five consecutive deficit budgets under the Dalton McGuinty Liberals, if they do get the opportunity to present a fifth budget. For the sake of taxpayers, we hope that's not the case. But then again, you never know. The targets shifted so much under the previous finance minister, there wasn't a target that the finance minister couldn't miss. The projections for the 2004-05 deficit, for example, were changed on four separate occasions; four different plans for the 2004-05 year. So who knows, really? In terms of what the finances of the province look like, all bets are off under the Dalton McGuinty Liberals, because they keep changing their minds and changing their plans. But the last word we have is, five consecutive deficit budgets.

Another key promise that Dalton McGuinty made during the 2003 campaign was, "I won't raise your taxes." In fact, during the campaign and running up to it, he would look into the TV camera and he would say to the TV camera, "I won't raise your taxes." Maybe my television wasn't large enough; maybe beneath the screen he had his fingers crossed. I don't know. Maybe someone with a larger TV could tell me if he had his fingers crossed. Maybe there was an asterisk that appeared after the Liberal leader—

**Mr. Dunlop:** But it wasn't on the screen.

**Mr. Hudak:** No, the asterisk was not in evidence. Maybe in high resolution, if you had an HDTV, a high-definition TV, you could pick up that asterisk, but certainly I didn't see it.

Then-opposition leader and head of the Ontario Liberal Party, Dalton McGuinty, said, "I won't raise your taxes." I think significantly—figuratively too—was it the second bill in the Ontario Legislature? One of his first acts as Premier of the province of Ontario was to bring a bill forward that raised taxes massively. I think I can use "massively" with no apology whatsoever. This was the largest tax increase in the history of the province. It made Floyd Laughren blush, this massive Dalton McGuinty tax increase, despite his promise not to increase our taxes.

**Mr. Delaney:** That was last year's budget.

**Mr. Hudak:** My colleague is saying, "That was last year's budget." It gets to my point that you really don't know what to believe. The member from Mississauga says, "That was last year's budget. We didn't really mean what was in our campaign platform. That's all in the past." It's a moving target. I think the reality is that Dalton McGuinty made a solemn promise. He look in the TV cameras and made a solemn promise that he would not increase taxes. They increased taxes on working families by some \$2.4 billion, through his health tax, impacting significantly on working families and some seniors, as well as a 12% increase to the corporate income tax rate, and overall, made for the single largest tax hike in the history of Ontario.



**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** Tax grab.

**Mr. Hudak:** A massive tax grab, as my friend from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke aptly calls it.

My friend from Leeds–Grenville noted too that there was another promise. It's not even on my list of key broken promises in the context of finance bills. There was another promise that there would be a referendum. Dalton McGuinty supported the Taxpayer Protection Act, which would have called for a referendum upon a broken promise of raising taxes. Sure enough, just like all those other promises Dalton McGuinty made at the time, it just sort of disappeared into the ether somewhere, and there was no referendum. It would have been an interesting and fair campaign. Dalton McGuinty could have put his case—

**Mr. Yakabuski:** They behaved like—

**Mr. Hudak:** The member is right, if you can figure out how to spell that.

It would have been an interesting and fair debate. The government could have said, "We're going to increase your taxes by \$2.4 billion in the form of a health tax"—allegedly, they claimed, going into health care. "We know we promised to the contrary, but we're going to do this," and then put it to the people. It would have been a fair debate. It would have been an honest thing to do, an honest question to ask and put before the people. But even that promise was, sadly, broken. So that's three.

I'll just go over five of the key broken promises when it comes to finances in the province of Ontario. Another one in the Liberal campaign manual was, "No accounting trickery in the province's books." This one took less than a year, I believe, to shatter, when then-Minister of Finance Sorbara got caught by the auditor red-handed by not properly accounting for \$4 billion in hydro liabilities. Well, \$4 billion is not exactly pocket change. A \$4-billion accounting trick; that took a lot of nerve. That's like Doug Henning trying to make an elephant disappear. An accounting trick involving \$4 billion in revenue—smoke and mirrors, like Mr. Henning may have used. The Provincial Auditor caught him out and made him change the books to ensure that that accounting trick did not continue to fester and harm the taxpayers of the province of Ontario.

1630

The fifth of the broken promises, as we consider whether this bill can be trusted in the first place, is a solemn promise by Dalton McGuinty to cap hydro rates at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour. I remember clearly in the campaign Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal candidates promising to freeze hydro rates at 4.3 cents. This is another one of those moving targets. It's a broken promise that just keeps breaking itself. It keeps giving—or taking is a better word for it. It's a broken promise that keeps taking, because since then they have increased the hydro rates, the cost of electricity—twice: I believe about a 28% increase, in my recollection, in the price of power. And we—I don't want to say "anticipate," but we are sad to expect and report that we will see another hydro

increase, they're saying probably in the neighbourhood of about 30%, in 2006. At a time when hard-working taxpayers, working families and seniors can ill afford hydro prices as they are, I don't know why energy minister, now finance minister, Duncan would want to hit taxpayers with another 30% increase in 2006.

Nonetheless, these are only five of the many examples of broken promises in the context of the fiscal approach, the fiscal policy of the Dalton McGuinty government. There is lots to talk about, and we'll settle with those five for the time being. But I know other—

**Interjection:** You only have an hour.

**Mr. Hudak:** It's true. If I used the whole time to recite the broken promises, I wouldn't have much left in my hour. It would go far beyond that.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** You wouldn't have much left in the session.

**Mr. Hudak:** Probably true.

So this is the context: We have, quite frankly, a government whose promises on the financial front cannot be trusted because of all the broken promises we've seen to date.

Let me also talk a little bit about some of the myths that the current Liberal government has brought forward. The government claimed in its public accounts in 2004-05 that they were able to reduce the Dalton McGuinty deficit to \$1.6 billion through sound fiscal management. Well, if you actually took the opportunity to look through public accounts, you'd see that that projection does not meet with the facts. In fact, the government at the time claimed that they had saved, I think, \$700 million through spending less, but in reality, it does not meet with the facts.

**Interjection.**

**Mr. Hudak:** I know the member from Scarborough is very anxious to hear the facts in public accounts. I know he has taken the time to read them.

**Mr. Duguid:** I'll go by the auditor.

**Mr. Hudak:** Well, it is your own document from your own finance minister. I will tell you what happened: The Liberal government actually overspent their budgets on some programs and services by more than \$1.6 billion, enough to balance the budget last year, I suppose. That was the number: \$1.6 billion.

Health care in 2004-05 wasn't on projection. In fact, the health care budget was almost a billion dollars over budget: \$900 million more in increased health care spending than the budget had predicted.

Some will say, "Well, health care is a priority. If you have extra money to spend, spend it in health care." It's a fair enough point, but I would guess that the vast majority of people watching the Legislative Assembly today and, I would say with certainty, the vast majority of constituents in the beautiful riding of Erie–Lincoln would say they are simply not getting their money's worth for that extra \$900 million overspent in the health care budget. I get that question all the time: "Where is the health tax going to? We are not seeing any benefits. We are seeing longer waiting lists. We're not seeing more



doctors arrive.” They wonder where that money has disappeared to. I remember that members of the assembly brought forward that in 2004-05 some of it was earmarked for sewage projects and some advertising for the ministry of recreation.

Certainly the main point is that despite raking in a lot more money in the health tax, despite raking in, I think, over a billion dollars in increased federal transfers, the Liberals still managed to outspend their own projections in health care by \$900 million.

The education and training budget was \$100 million over budget. The social services budget was some \$50 million beyond what was projected in the 2004-05 budget. The economic development cluster, that cluster of ministries, was over half a billion dollars over budget. So health care, education and training, social resources, environment resources and economic development—you combine those sectors, which is the vast majority of spending in the provincial budget, and they missed their targets by something like \$1.6 billion; \$1.6 billion in spending beyond projections.

Let’s not forget there was already a massive increase in provincial spending contained in the 2004-05 budget. I think the public accounts themselves say that the average increase in education and health care spending in the two years under Dalton McGuinty has been some 10% on average. There were already built in significant increases in those two budgets, but despite that—despite that—they overspent their own projections by some \$1.6 billion dollars.

One of the only highlights, and they don’t really acknowledge this in their spin, in their press releases from the ministry office—but if they found any savings whatsoever, it was simply because interest rates were lower—was that there was some \$1 billion saved in the most recent budget because interest rates were lower than expected when the minister delivered his budget in the spring of 2004. So by serendipity, by good luck, by good fortune there was a billion dollars in savings because of lower-than-expected interest rates. But that money was blown on much bigger spending without seeing results in higher-quality health care or reduced wait times, for example.

The other interesting thing, when you read in detail the public accounts for the fiscal year 2004-05, is that there was a windfall in what is likely one-time revenue. It’s like then-Finance Minister Sorbara won the lottery, a big windfall, and not by good planning, not because they made the right forecasts, but simply because of good luck and circumstances there is a \$3.2-billion windfall in new revenue—one time. I’ll give you examples of the windfall, Mr. Speaker. As I said before, almost a billion dollars—to be accurate, \$961 million—was saved on interest payments on the debt due to low interest rates. Interest rates were predicted to be a certain level, they came in lower, and by good fortune the government had a \$961-million saving in the fiscal year 2004-05.

Also put into the stocking, a nice treat came from the federal government which increased transfers to the

province by \$1.1 billion more than was accounted for, more than was projected in the budget. Certainly, every year there are numerous programs the federal government contributes to—things like health care and child care in Ontario. Those are all well-known and can be accounted for in advance. But when you look at the reality in the public accounts compared to the projections in the budget in the spring of 2004, there was a \$1.1-billion jackpot from the federal government in one-time revenue to provincial coffers. As well, corporate income tax from previous years came in; bills that were owed in the past were brought in in this past fiscal year: \$411 million that was accounted for in a one-time fiscal bonus.

Furthermore, the federal government was extremely generous in additional money during this past fiscal year. Furthermore, there was a one-time revenue increase arriving from a federal recalculation of tax entitlements from 1995 to 2003. For a period 10 years ago until 2003, the federal government recalculated the amount of money to be transferred to Ontario, so about an eight- or nine-year span, depending on the fiscal years: one-time revenue of almost half a billion dollars, part of the jackpot, part of the windfall that the province received this past fiscal year.

Lastly, as part of that was \$287 million to do the recovery of prior years’ expenses, all recalculated in one fiscal year. So in one fell swoop, Santa was very generous this past year to the provincial treasury: \$3.2 billion—as my friend from Parry Sound-Muskoka said, “That ain’t exactly pocket change”—\$3.2 billion in surprise revenue that the province was not expecting came into the coffers in 2004-05. Despite that huge windfall, was there any break for Ontario taxpayers hard pressed to make ends meet? Not a single one.

1640

**Mr. Miller:** They must have balanced the budget with all that extra revenue.

**Mr. Hudak:** One of my colleagues says, with a lot of extra revenue, they must have balanced the budget. I mean, come on: \$3.2 billion in bonus money at the end of the year.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** Good managers.

**Mr. Hudak:** I know. That’s what I’m saying to my friend from Northumberland. You claim that you’re good managers, but if you’re counting on \$3.2 billion in surprise finances at the end of the year, that’s not good management. It might be a good style for betting at the racetrack, it might be a good approach for going down to the casino in Niagara Falls and playing the roulette wheel, but for managing the books in Ontario—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. It is Halloween and I know you want to have fun, but let’s listen to the person who has the floor. The member for Erie-Lincoln.

**Mr. Hudak:** I know it’s provocative. It’s scary to imagine \$3.2 billion in bonus revenue, and you still fail to balance the books. You still fail to balance the books, with that massive increase in revenue coming in on top of



the \$10-billion revenue grab that the province of Ontario under Dalton McGuinty has taken out of the pockets of working families and businesses—despite that, running a deficit.

This notion of good fiscal management: I don't think that betting on the roulette wheel is good fiscal management, with all due respect. This notion of good fiscal management is horse feathers. You increased spending substantially, some \$1.6 billion above projections, and depended on a \$3.2-billion windfall.

That's what will make it interesting to see what the new finance minister, Mr. Duncan, the member from Windsor—St Clair, will be presenting tomorrow. Because of this one-time windfall, the books came in at \$1.6 billion for 2004-05. I'll be interested to see if the deficit for 2005-06, our current fiscal year, will in fact increase tomorrow. Will the new finance minister have a poor entry, I think, on to the political stage by actually increasing the deficit? That is, I say to my colleague—I know he's good at math—about an 88% or so increase, right? That \$1.6 billion to \$2.8 billion will be substantial.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** Stay tuned, Tim.

**Mr. Hudak:** My colleague from Northumberland says, "Stay tuned," and we'll wait with bated breath, but I don't think there will be good news for a new finance minister when he goes and increases the deficit in his first public appearance. We'll see what happens, and it happens tomorrow, but certainly the answers I got today during question period from the Acting Premier were not at all encouraging.

What has all this meant? I can make small side bets, but I do bet you that his projected deficit will actually be higher. You've got to go way back in time to find a finance minister who came midstream into a government and then increased the deficit. You've got to go back a long time. I don't think it's a title that this finance minister wants to wear, not exactly a prize he wants to put on the mantel, but we will see. And I hope—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hudak:** My colleagues are making a lot of noise. I know they're surprised by how much money came in as a big, one-time bonus to the province of Ontario. I know that's surprising to them, but I look forward to them standing up in the House and criticizing the finance minister when he increases the deficit. We will see what tomorrow brings.

I've got to think that if you decide, of all dates, that the economic statement will be on the day of Justice Gomery's long-awaited report on the scandal of the federal Liberal Party—about the money stuffed in the envelopes and all that kind of stuff—if you decide to put out the economic statement on the same day as probably the most-anticipated report in a generation, that makes me wonder what the finance minister has got to hide. If it's supposed to be good news, if it's supposed to be the days of wine and roses and such, why isn't he doing it on a day after Gomery? Why didn't he do it this past week? Why is the finance minister issuing the economic statement on the day when the media will be singly focused on the scandal of the federal Liberal Party out of Ottawa?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I've been too long in this place and I'm being too cynical. Maybe it will be good news. Maybe he'll balance the budget.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I think you are. He's cynical.

**Mr. Hudak:** Maybe so. Maybe my colleagues say with full confidence that tomorrow the minister will announce a significant tax break to help working families, a significant tax break maybe for small businesses to hire more people. Maybe that's going to come true, but I doubt it. We doubt it.

**Mr. Dunlop:** We all doubt it.

**Mr. Hudak:** We on this side doubt it. I think, in fact, we'll see continued bad news and maybe the first finance minister in Lord knows how long to come in and take over for another finance minister and substantially increase the deficit.

What does this all mean for Ontario families: the broken promises, the runaway spending, higher taxes? The average Ontario family—let's say a typical Ontario family—making a total of \$61,000 is now paying \$2,000 more per year in additional costs and taxes that they were not paying before Dalton McGuinty was elected.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hudak:** Now I am hearing a lot of noise from across the way, but you've got to be hearing this. When you're in your ridings on the weekends, when you're in your ridings when the House is in session—and I know my colleagues opposite are working hard. In doing that, you must be going to public events, and you're telling me that nobody comes up to you and complains about taxes, hydro costs?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hudak:** They're saying no. Maybe they all represent the riding of Wonderland. I really don't know. But this notion that you're not hearing about high taxes, higher hydro costs, higher heating costs this winter, that it's harder for working families to make ends meet, I find difficult to countenance. I find it difficult to believe. I believe that in Northumberland or Brantford, for example, ridings not entirely different in their income levels—a lot of working middle-class families in those ridings, a lot of seniors who are retired there, a lot of young people who want to climb that up ladder, buy their own home, buy a car, get married, a lot of the same kind of people in my riding—they're extremely concerned about the higher taxes, higher hydro, higher gas prices. Come on, you must hear about these things back in Northumberland, back in Brantford.

Why are they complaining? They're complaining for good reason. Because there has been a merciless increase in taxes and living expenses in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. That typical family I mentioned now pays almost \$700—\$690—out of their pockets each and every year in the new income tax, the so-called health tax, that we're not even convinced actually goes into improving health care. In fact, I think you rejected all of our suggestions that legislatively it would be tied to health care. They were all rejected. Maybe you can spin this in the



chamber, maybe you feel comfortable doing so, but I don't think, if you're putting it into sewer projects or recreation advertising, that people will say that's improved health care.

Natural gas costs are increasing \$65 for the average house this year. That's a significant increase. Was it Enbridge that was allowed under this government through the OEB a significant increase—I suspect others will follow—in their natural gas costs? I remember Dwight Duncan, the member for Windsor area, now finance minister, just railing in this Legislature about increases in utility costs, saying that the previous government allowed the OEB to increase the cost of natural gas on working families, and now that he's there, all those promises, all those commitments are forgotten. As a result, natural gas costs are increasing by \$65 for the average house this year.

Gasoline prices—you know it's a strange world where you see 87 cents a litre and you think, "Oh, I should pull over before it goes way up there again." It was only a few cents—

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** It's 84.6 cents in Listowel.

1650

**Mr. Hudak:** We should all drive to Listowel then: 84.6 cents per litre. But it was only a few years ago that we were down in the 60-some cents and not too long ago—

**Interjection:** What about diesel?

**Mr. Hudak:** It's a concern, diesel is a significant concern as well. We heard a lot about that from the farmers at the OFA south dinner on Friday night in Pelham. Gasoline costs are estimated to take about a \$600 bite from the average household, from the average working family, this year. I know that some members that are in the GTA, or outside the GTA area, have a lot of working families—even both partners in the relationship are commuting on a regular basis into the GTA. I expect, for those individuals, like a couple who came up to me at the fall fair in Wainfleet, where they both live—one works in Burlington; one works, I think, in Mississauga, and making that commute daily from Wainfleet is way more, I expect, than \$600 per year.

Drivers' licences now cost \$25 more for each driver—which I did today, as a matter of fact, at a great shop in Smithville. I'd recommend it for members who want quick service from one of the MTO contracted-out operators. A \$25 increase, though, in my driver's fee from a couple of years ago. Annual eye exams have been delisted, at the cost of \$75 per adult. Cancelled income tax cuts that were in the budget, that were on their way: some \$240 in lost spending. An important number of my constituents in Erie-Lincoln and, I suspect, some in the Speaker's riding as well, and other members of this chamber, were counting on the independent school tax credit, had banked on for 11 months, expecting that to come through to help relieve the costs. Individuals who pay full taxes into the public school board and make the choice to send their children to independent schools had a

break coming on their income taxes and then, I think in a mean-spirited way, had that ripped away, 11 months into the year. Highly regrettable.

For the average working family in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario there is some \$2,000 more they're paying in taxes and fees, a higher cost of living, than previous to Dalton McGuinty. I do hope that my colleagues opposite's confidence will be rewarded tomorrow, and Finance Minister Duncan will come forward with some break for working families, for these seniors, for young people; some break, instead of continuing to claw and claw and claw more money out of their pockets, which happens in every budget, sadly, in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.

You know the other interesting thing: how much that revenue to the provincial government has gone up since taking office. The increase in the corporate tax rate by 10% brought in \$3 billion more; the new health taxes, about \$2.4 billion more; cancelled PIT cuts, about \$1.7 billion more; tobacco taxes, among others, \$200 million. I think I'm right. My recollection, I believe, is accurate: that there is some \$10 billion more in revenue coming into the province of Ontario. We're still running a deficit—and a deficit that may go up, in fact, tomorrow.

**Mr. Ramal:** What about health care and education?

**Mr. Hudak:** The member opposite from Brampton says, "What about health care and education?" I think people value health care and education investments, but they want to make sure their tax dollars are actually leading to improved services: a reduction of waiting time, for example; more doctors coming into the Fort Erie area, for example; more investments in long-term care, perhaps. If they actually saw a return on their investments, I think it would be a different story. But when I speak to the residents of Erie-Lincoln, or other residents across the province of Ontario, by and large they're paying more and receiving fewer services from the province of Ontario.

Some middle-class families, seniors, young people hard-hit in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario; the province getting fatter—some \$10 billion in increased revenue, as I mentioned; some \$3.2 billion in one-time funds from the federal government, or serendipity.

The other important concern to put into the context of Bill 197 is the economic indicators in the province of Ontario. I have great concern, and I hope my colleagues opposite have great concern: Consumer confidence slipped seven points in August in Ontario, and it slipped a further six points in September of 2005. Consumers, in many senses, helped to drive the economy in the past little while—one of the more important parts of economic progress. Now we see that consumer confidence slipped some 13 points in the last two months alone. Much of this decline is attributed to significant cooling of interest in big-ticket purchases, and also may be reflected in housing market numbers.

I think I've heard the government—or members opposite anyway, on the government side—talk about the housing side of the economy. They often look at housing



starts as a gauge of our economic performance. But with a reduction in disposable income and an increase in tax rates, concerns about higher interest rates as well and, I think, an underlying concern about job security, housing starts are projected to plummet to under 65,000 per year by 2007, down from a peak of 85,000 in 2003.

Following this year as well, the floor is projected to fall out on personal savings rates. Between 2005 and 2012, the personal savings rate is forecast to drop by over 35%, with a measurable decline in each and every year. Clearly, inarguably, the dramatically increased costs of living in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario are having a dramatic impact on Ontarians' pocketbooks and investments in the coming year.

I heard the Acting Premier's answer today. I don't think that members of cabinet have grasped the significance of the drop in consumer confidence, of the worrisome trend on the housing side. Nor do I think they fully grasp the fact that Ontario has lost 42,000 manufacturing jobs, comparing September 2005 to September 2004—almost a 4% drop in manufacturing jobs. I know that routinely staff will give ministers numbers and they'll quote the service sector and such, but surely there has to be grave concern about the future of manufacturing in the province of Ontario when you see a 4% decline in jobs, when you see some significant-profile companies closing down, moving operations to Mexico, to the States, to other Canadian jurisdictions. Surely there must be grave concern when you hear businesses come forward—the chamber of commerce folks recently down from Kenora—about the impact of high energy prices and, frankly, a loony energy policy, an ill-conceived energy policy impacting on investment in the province of Ontario today. Manufacturing jobs are down some 4%.

We do have to have concern about the rising interest rates and, I think importantly too, the fact that the Canadian dollar has increased and is holding at a high level.

**Mr. Delaney:** That's how strong the economy is.

**Mr. Hudak:** The member says, "That's how strong the economy is." I don't think he's listening to the Ontario version of the numbers. Usually when I hear fellow colleagues speak, they talk about Canada. The Canadian numbers are stronger because Alberta is blowing us away; they're leaving us far behind. BC's performance is much stronger. Ontario, on so many indicators now, is behind the provincial average: manufacturing jobs down some 42,000, almost 4% down. We are highly sensitive in Ontario due to our degree of trade with the Americans, a good part through the Peace Bridge. I was born and raised in Fort Erie. If our dollar continues to stay high, I worry about further impacts on the manufacturing sector in the province of Ontario.

Over the last quarter, retail trade actually fell by 1.2%. Personal bankruptcies in the province of Ontario are up. From July 2004 to July 2005 the personal bankruptcy rate was up 0.6% from the previous year, in contrast to the rest of the country: bankruptcies down by 1%. So, while the rest of the provinces—maybe not all—are moving

forward and bankruptcies are going down, are in decline, the province of Ontario—for my entire life, we've always prided ourselves on being the economic engine, the mightiest of the 10—is falling behind, with a 6% increase in the bankruptcy rate for the previous year.

In August, there were 1,862 corporate bankruptcies, almost 2,000 corporate bankruptcies reported in Ontario for the 2005 year, representing over \$670 million in value. Forty-five per cent, nearly half of these bankruptcies, came from the construction, manufacturing and retail industries. What's important about these figures is to reinforce and illustrate the point that here again, Ontario's decline in bankruptcies—Ontario's bankruptcy numbers are worse than the provincial average.

1700

In considering Bill 197, we enter a time when working families are in trouble. An average couple living in Beamsville, for example, has \$2,000 less in their pocket, and they're worried about the future. They're worried about the increasing costs of home heating; they're worried about their taxes. With assessments as well going through the roof across the province of Ontario, they are justifiably worried about their property taxes and their education taxes increasing. Seniors living on fixed incomes are wondering how they're going to make ends meet at the end of the month.

The other big item the government continues to miss—and I do hope there will be some help in tomorrow's economic statement—is that on so many indicators and in so many trends, Ontario, formerly the engine of growth in Canada, is in jeopardy of going off the tracks.

I'll refer to numbers as well: There were some good articles in the *Globe and Mail* recently, reinforcing my point—it's not just me. Jeffrey Simpson, Friday, October 7, 2005. His column starts out: "You live in Scarborough, Nepean, Newmarket or St. Catharines.

"You earn \$65,000 a year, or so, the average household income. Your spouse works. You have a mortgage, a car and a family."

Mr. Simpson goes on to say, "You are about to get poorer, perhaps much poorer, in terms of disposable income. A perfect economic storm that will reduce incomes is about to hit middle-class Ontario...."

He does put it in the context of an upcoming federal election, but I think his points are instructive for us in the Ontario Legislative Assembly. All Ontarians are going to shoulder higher gas and heating fuel costs. Ontarians are to face four other pressures that will shrink their incomes.

This is the first: "The provincial energy minister has already announced that electricity bills will skyrocket"—skyrocket, I'd say again—"starting in February. These have already been soaring, but the trajectory will increase."

Secondly, "Homeowners are receiving this week their new municipal property assessments. They are staggering. In Ottawa, the average increase is 11%, with some neighbourhoods experiencing increases of 25%" in their assessment notices. Mr. Simpson goes on to say, "These high assessments will inevitably be followed by



property tax increases. These will eclipse the rate of inflation and any rise in household incomes. So to gas, fuel and electricity costs, add soaring property taxes."

Number three: In four or five months' time comes tax time in 2006. "Citizens will begin to collect and assemble information for their personal income taxes." Those who don't know already will soon learn "how much their pockets are being depleted by the McGuinty government's health care premiums," taking "hundreds of dollars from a middle-class family."

"Finally," Mr. Simpson says, "the 87-cent Canadian dollar: It will pinch companies integrated into the continental economy. A powerful union like the Canadian Auto Workers union, for example, could only secure wage increases below the inflation rate. Those workers will now suffer a decline in disposable income. A powerful union represented them." Think of how the many workers without a union, or with one less robust than the CAW, are going to do under those circumstances.

"So, what do Mr. and Mrs. Middle-Class Ontario face," as we consider Bill 197 today? "Downward pressure on wages from the rising dollar. Sharp and unavoidable increases for basic necessities: gas, heating fuel, electricity, health premiums. Property taxes rising faster than inflation or incomes." In short, "the perfect storm."

A couple of days later, Saturday, October 22, the *Globe and Mail's* business section report on consumers: "A 'Bigger Chunk of Money' Going to Bills.

"Rising interest rates are an ominous sign for those with variable-rate mortgages and loans.... Soaring heating and gasoline costs will only add to consumers' misery this winter."

In this article, Rob Carrick, the journalist, talks about a typical working family, the Kavanaughs of Washago, Ontario. Charlene Kavanaugh, who works in Barrie for State Farm says, "Hydro is going up and, because I live in a rural home and hydro is my main source of heating, that's a huge thing."

What is significant about today, as we get later into 2005, "is the vulnerability of Canadians to higher borrowing and living costs."

TD Bank has some interesting figures: "Back in 1997, the average person's loans, mortgage, credit-card debt and other financial liabilities were about equal to their entire annual after-tax income plus an additional 6% or so." That's a lot of money—on the hook for their entire after-tax income plus an additional 6%. The sad story is that it has begun to get worse. "Debts rose to 119% of personal disposable income two years ago, and today," 2005, as we consider Bill 197, we're on the hook for 124.5% of after-tax income.

As interest rates go up and the cost of living increases, consumers are hugely vulnerable. I won't repeat, but it goes on to talk about the heating costs, the borrowing costs, the interest costs.

Probably the most instructive lesson comes from the concluding paragraph in this *Globe and Mail* story that I refer members to of Rob Carrick, Saturday, October 22,

2005, Report on Business. He basically accumulates the increase of costs on a typical working family from the utilities, the taxes and the increase because of the typical vulnerability to higher interest rates. The extra monthly cost to this family would be \$352, or \$4,224 annually. A perfect storm: \$4,224 per year coming from a typical middle-class family. It's absolutely unaffordable.

Combine that with concerns over the state of the economy, and I can't fathom why the previous finance minister would not commit, would not help out these working families, would not try to do something to ease their burden and to help our economy turn things around and reverse some of these worrisome trends that have us, at best, average, if not behind the average in Canada—a reverse of Ontario's traditional position. The previous finance minister was not interested in that at all.

Maybe there is some hope. As members opposite said, maybe tomorrow the new finance minister will come forward and offer for the Kavanaughs in Washago, working in Barrie, and the working families down in Northumberland or Brantford or Ottawa or Lambton county and the hard-working taxpayers near Lincoln, maybe, we hope, some break for those working families. But I do worry, given the trends of broken promises we have seen to date, that that will not be realized.

I'll move forward. I thought it was important to set the stage for the context of this bill. There are a number of schedules attached to Bill 197, and I won't be able to get into them all today. I think my colleagues will do a bit more. I'll call attention to some of the highlights that I look forward to debating in this chamber, and hopefully some improvements in the legislation.

Schedule B, if passed, would grant tax exemptions to certain classes of health professions. Amendments to the Business Corporations Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, would allow this. Basically, in order to, I think, retain more doctors, have more doctors practise in the province of Ontario, the government extended this benefit to doctors. I can understand the motivation behind that. Certainly, I know that one of the top calls I get to my constituency office is on a lack of a general practitioner in the Niagara or Dunnville area. There has also been a public commitment to extend that to dentists so they can benefit from the changes to the Business Corporations Act and the RHPA.

The question, though, that is begged in this legislation is that there are a significant number of other health care professions that are not addressed by this legislation or by any commitments the previous finance minister made: the Ontario Chiropractic Association, the Ontario Physiotherapy Association; the Ontario Psychological Association; the RPNAO, the practical nurses, who were here last week; and, for example, opticians, optometrists, chiropodists and midwives.

1710

I'm curious to find out why the government drew the line in the place it did—I hope I'll hear from members opposite or from the staff listening attentively behind the Speaker's chair—and how the calculations were made. If



it's limited to doctors and dentists, what are the impacts? I think I've heard the number, between \$10 million and \$40 million. What are the impacts and how are they calculated? If the same rights are transferred on to other health care professions or other business professionals, what will be the impact on the budget? And help me understand the government's rationale for limiting it to only doctors and dentists, at least by public commitment, to date. So we'll look forward to more information on that, and I hope members opposite will be forthcoming with information on the calculation and the logic behind that.

Schedule D: changes to the Corporations Tax Act to increase the film tax credit from 20% to 30%; other changes that deal with the film and television industry and amendments to the Corporations Tax Act. We're pleased to see this aspect in the bill. We have grave concerns about the approach to finances as a whole, as I've illustrated in my opening comments. As far as schedule D is concerned, we are pleased to see this and I want to refer members to a press release of November 29, 2004, by Ontario PC Leader John Tory, where he called upon the McGuinty government to move and to bring forward these tax credits. He said, and rightly so, that under the Mike Harris and Ernie Eves governments, "Ontario pioneered and perfected the use of tax credits to attract film production. For years, Ontario was in a league of its own," and other states and provinces copied what the then PC government had brought forward to spur film production in the province.

Mr. Tory went on to say, "Times have changed. The dollar's value is rising and Ontario has more competition. Other provinces are taking action.... And while Manitoba has a 35% tax credit and Newfoundland offers 40%, the Ontario Liberals" are stuck at 20% despite campaign promises to the contrary. I believe he brought this up quite often publicly as well, and they were pleased to see that our advice from across the floor was incorporated, to an extent, in schedule D of the legislation. There is some way to go, but I did want to recognize—and I hope the members will as well—the work Mr. Tory did in pushing for schedule D to be in this legislation. We hoped it would have been sooner but, all the same, we're pleased to see that there has been some reaction.

In the interests of time, maybe I'll come back to the other schedules, but I want to get to schedule K. I am trying to be fair and balanced in my comments. There are some aspects of the bill that we are pleased to see, and we want to encourage the government to continue down these paths. We regret that they've been put as part of the budget package, which does nothing for working families, which does nothing for small businesses, which continues to claw in more money and continues to run deficits despite record revenues coming into the province of Ontario.

Schedule L, the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005, amendments, we're pleased to see as part of this legislation. I know a number of my colleagues have met with the private career colleges folks. They're pleased

that there are proper checks and balances under this particular schedule. We will look for ways to improve it and hopefully have a chance to suggest any ways to improve it. We look forward to hearing from those involved with the private career college sector. But I generally wanted to note that although we are displeased with the approach to the finances in a general sense, as I said in about 45 minutes of our address, we are pleased to see accountability measures included in the legislation under schedule L for the private career colleges. I believe it's something that the then finance minister Sorbara cared quite a bit about, so we are pleased to see him moving forward in that direction. We wish it weren't part of a budget bill that spends so much money and runs deficits, but I do want to commend the then finance minister for moving forward with that schedule L of the bill.

Schedule M: As part of schedule M, booster seats in the province are given the same retail sales tax exemption as child car seats. Again, if these are being mandated in Ontario, members of the opposition and, I expect, members of the government, called for a retail sales tax exemption for booster car seats. I've already illustrated how difficult it is for working families, young parents, to get by in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Another burden on the booster seats, for them, their grandparents or relatives or whoever would transport the children. At the very least, we had demanded that there be a retail sales tax exemption on this, and it is included in schedule M of the legislation.

I want to give particular credit to the member for Wellington as well, who had brought this forward. I recollect a private member's bill of this nature. I know the member for Wellington had brought this up in the assembly a number of times. He may have a chance to speak about this bill in more detail, but I think the member for Wellington should be recognized for his championing of a retail sales tax exemption for booster seats.

I do have some concerns with a couple of other schedules in the bill—schedule E, for example. Maybe that will be better explained to me.

Schedule F, in terms of improving access to freedom of information requests to universities, is interesting, particularly in the context of the government stalling a number of FOIs that are already out there for things like Minister Takhar's cellphone. Minister Takhar, the transportation minister, has been significantly criticized by his own Premier for lapses in judgment, and now we're finding out that routine freedom of information requests about his schedule and cell bills are way, way behind. So if the government is serious about expanding access under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to universities, we do ask that, at the very least, they respond to FOIs already out there and set an example with quick turnarounds for FOIs, particularly on the ministers' offices. Minister Takhar in particular is way behind in that respect.

Schedules H and K—I talked about K a little bit earlier—deal in a more general sense with finances and



giving ministers more authority. Schedule K, particularly, allows the government to borrow up to \$7.1 billion under the Ontario Loan Act. If you put it in the context of some of the comments I made earlier, in terms of the number of broken promises that this government has made and the huge expansion in revenues due to their big tax increases that are impacting on the economy—and, I suspect, over time those revenues will decline as the economy slows as a result—and despite a massive \$3.2-billion one-time revenue windfall, the government continues to run deficits and continues to stonewall working families, seniors and young people who can't make ends meet. So we have to wonder, with aspects of the bill like schedules E and K, if the Dalton McGuinty government can be trusted to use those new powers in light of the major problems that I've pointed out with the finances and the state of the economy.

In conclusion, I think we have to look at the facts in the context of Bill 197. The current government has mismanaged the finances of the province: massive revenue increases, spending out of control, higher taxes and no break for working families. By 2008-09, the McGuinty Liberals plan to spend over \$90 billion—some \$16 billion more taken from taxpayers than when they were over there—and, despite that, ongoing deficits, debt increases, and we're not seeing results in terms of taxpayer dollars being invested wisely.

This is not a fiscal plan for the province of Ontario; it's a fiscal problem for the province of Ontario and our hard-pressed taxpayers. I ask the government to bring forward measures to improve the economy, to help out working families, because only with a strong economic foundation can we improve health care and education and improve those services.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Marchese:** It's hard not to speak to the broken promises theme that the member from Erie-Lincoln made reference to. The image that I am struck with is the one of McGuinty where he says, "No new taxes," and it's played and replayed over and over again. You've got McGuinty saying, "No new taxes. Look at my lips." It's a comical scene.

1720

I don't dispute that we need more money. In fact, prior to the election, we said, "We need new sources of money." Only New Democrats were able to say, "We need new sources of funding," after the \$13 billion the Tories had taken away. So that image of McGuinty saying, "No new taxes. Look at my lips," is a particularly memorable one for New Democrats because he didn't have the courage to say prior to the election, "We're going to increase your taxes."

Then, after the election, when he institutes the new tax regime, most of the Liberal members say, "Ah, but let's move forward. Let's look at where we're going rather than where we were." How easy it is for McGuinty and other Liberals to say that, because, you see, you've got to base it on something, and most people vote on the basis of promises. So it's not quite good enough for the

Liberals to say, "Let's look forward. Why look back?" The reason we look back is so that we can judge you now and judge you in 2007 based on new promises you're going to make.

Promises are very, very important. I will speak to a couple of others, including the cap on hydro rates. The Liberals said, "We will cap hydro rates until 2006." No sooner do they get into government than they say, "The cap is gone."

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** Do you think caps are a good idea, Rosie?

**Mr. Marchese:** That's not the issue, madame, and I'll have a lot more time to speak to that in a few minutes.

**Mr. Delaney:** I had planned to use my two minutes here today to talk about how important one of our budget commitments, that of public infrastructure renewal, is to our constituents in Mississauga West, where finally, after years of waiting, we've got phase 2 of our Credit Valley Hospital expansion. But in listening to some of the comments from my colleague from Erie-Lincoln, I was, first of all, glad to see him join with our caucus in giving some credit where credit is due and praising the member from Vaughan-King-Aurora, Greg Sorbara, for his work on Ontario's budget. I thought that was a good quote, and I'm real pleased to hear that.

I'd also like to quote another member of the official opposition speaking about our government's progress toward a balanced budget. Asked by Global Television about balancing the budget, this member said that "if it takes three or four years that's fine—a reasonable period of time, because you can't do things in too jarring a fashion." This was said on Focus Ontario.

**Ms. Wynne:** Who said that?

**Mr. Delaney:** John Tory said that. He has actually endorsed our budget plan. I thought that was very magnanimous of John Tory. We followed a government that well, let's cut to the chase: They were bad fiscal managers. They had a legacy of mismanagement. They mortgaged our future with their tax cuts, they failed to invest in crucial services, and they left us with a public infrastructure debt that this government is coping with even as we bring the budget gradually and sustainably into balance, because one thing that Ontarians know is that there aren't going to be fire sales of assets to get to a balanced budget. Hello, 1999; hello, sale of the 407—it's not going to happen under this government, not this year and not in the future.

This province is doing well. We've created a net 193,100 new jobs. That's one measure of why this budget is working.

**Mr. Miller:** It's my pleasure to join in and add some comments to the excellent hour-long speech made by the member from Erie-Lincoln critiquing Bill 197 and the budget of the Liberal government. I find it interesting that the member from Mississauga West is criticizing John Tory for, when the budget came out in the spring, having a few positive things to say about the Liberal government's budget. I think John Tory is showing that he's not your typical politician, that he has the guts to say



positive things when there is the odd, small, little positive thing to be said. I'm awfully pleased we have a leader who is trying to bring some civility to this Legislature and is willing to think for himself.

The member from Erie–Lincoln did talk a lot about the broken promises that have been brought in by this government. A couple of things he did miss, though, in talking about finances: He didn't talk about the cancellation of the seniors' tax credit that was brought in—a lot of people probably aren't aware that a seniors' tax credit on property taxes was brought in in of June of 2003. That would have meant a 25% reduction on property tax for most seniors in this province. It was brought in. It was passed in June. Then one of the first things this government did when they were elected in October of 2003 was to cancel that tax credit that would have benefited seniors in this province to the tune of 25% of their property tax.

Another spending issue that was not touched on by the member for Erie–Lincoln was the recent money they're spending on greenbelt advertising, some 25 million of your tax dollars that are going to fund the Greenbelt Foundation. I don't know if you've heard the ads on the radio about whether you've seen a deer or not, but it's got to be the worst case of partisan government advertising through a third party that I've ever witnessed and should be an embarrassment for this government, which said they were going change things.

**Mr. Ramal:** I was listening for almost an hour to the member for Erie–Lincoln talking about the budget. Whatever he read, I guess he wasn't reading it right, because the people of this province are seeing a different picture. They're seeing good education being implemented, they're seeing good support of education, they're seeing good investment in post-secondary education, they're seeing good investment in health care and they're seeing the creation of jobs in many different parts of the province. That's what they're seeing. That's why the people of this province appreciate our budget.

I'm supporting this budget, as I mentioned before, not only because it's a great budget but also because the budget was delivered from this House, read in this House and given from this House, not from somewhere else, because we believe in the people; we believe in the assembly of the people. I believe that the results will start showing in many different sectors of our society: in the hospitals, schools, colleges and universities and also infrastructure.

He was talking about why we didn't balance the books yet. We maintain our investment in all the elements of our society because we believe in investing more in many different parts—in education, health care and infrastructure—which means it strengthens our economy and gives us the ability to lower the deficit, which we inherited from you when you guys were in government.

We're looking toward it because we don't want to cut the investment to the people. That's why we want to go slowly but surely, to make sure we have great infrastructure, great education and great health, to give us the

ability to eliminate the deficit and deliver our promises, our vision, for the future of this province. We believe our vision is working, our vision to have a province able to compete on the international market with a new technological era.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Erie–Lincoln has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Hudak:** I appreciate the comments from my colleagues on my remarks on Bill 197. I didn't know that Pollyanna had won so many seats in the last election for the Ontario Liberal caucus. It's true. Some of the fundamental economic indicators are worrisome: the loss of manufacturing jobs, the fact that on so many fronts Ontario now is a middling economy in Canada instead of being the economic leader that it always had been before.

I don't know how members opposite can reconcile that in the Ontario housing market, residential construction has suffered in the past year. As Statistics Canada has reported, housing start units have decreased by 16.7% in the province. The Royal Bank of Canada Financial Group's current analysis in September had further concerns about Ontario's housing market. Across Canada, results show that home sales have increased in 13 metropolitan areas and decreased in 12. But distressing is that among the 13 CMAs where home sales have increased, only one is in Ontario, and of the 12 decreases in the entire country, nine are in Ontario: Windsor, Hamilton, Toronto, Greater Sudbury, London, Ottawa, St. Catharines, Niagara, Kingston and Thunder Bay.

The Toronto Star reported on September 14, 2005, "Watch out, Toronto. Watch out, Toronto. Some U.S. retailers looking to open stores in Canada are seriously considering making Calgary their first stop.

"Retail sales in Alberta rose 11.4 per cent in the first half of the year." Ontario, on retail sales, is "behind the national average with 5.4% growth." The hospitality industry has come forward with shocking statistics that, again, Ontario is significantly behind the national average—worrisome trends that I hope members opposite will show greater concern about in the future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

1730

**Mr. Marchese:** I welcome the citizens of Ontario to this parliamentary channel. We are on live; it's 5:30, it's Monday and we're going to have a lively debate on the issues of what this government did or didn't do. I will begin with the issue of promises.

**Interjection:** Halloween is very scary.

**Mr. Marchese:** Halloween is pretty scary to the Liberals; it's true. That's why you're here and not out there.

The issue of promises is important, and let me tell you why. I talked about the promise the government had made, McGuinty in particular, and the band of Liberals that follows him, that there would be no new taxes. He said that social services would be increased and taxes would not. Understand the inconsistency of that. You can't increase social services or services in general without new sources of money. You have the Premier



saying, "We're not going to increase your taxes, but we will increase your services."

I understand that the people of Ontario are looking for magic each and every time, each and every election, and they thought the Liberals could do both. They wanted to believe, everyone wants to believe, even when they know intellectually that it is impossible to do two contradictory things.

The government didn't have the integrity, I would say, prior to the election to say, "We need new revenue. The Tories have cut income taxes to the bone. We've lost \$13 billion in the space of eight years. We need to rebuild in order to provide money for services we lost and for promises we made." Where is the courage in a political party prior to the election to say, "We need to tax you"? So you had, foolishly, McGuinty being interviewed, and there he is on that clip, back and forth, "No new taxes. Look at my lips: No new taxes," and it was comical. It still is comical to remember.

But he and others in this place, the other Liberals who are sitting here, listening to this discussion, are saying, "Yes, but please look what we had to deal with. We really didn't know the condition we were in. We had to do it. Don't judge us on our promises. Judge us on where we are going," as if promises mean nothing.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Marchese:** If Mr. Levac has a different point of view, he should state it in his two minutes. But every Liberal MPP I have spoken to here and any television program that's been done says the same thing: "We had to do it, and judge us based on where we are going, not where we were and the promises we made." People need to judge you based on the promises you made.

"We are going to get rid of the clawback on the national child benefit supplement." You had so many Liberals, McGuinty, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and others, saying, "We will end the clawback." And, if you're a poor person looking for that little extra benefit, you believe; you believe in those promises and you'll vote for any Liberal who says these things. No sooner do they get into office than that promise of the clawback was gone. All they gave was a \$3-per-child increase the first year, and that was it.

**Mr. Duguid:** Yes; the first time in—what?—10 years.

**Mr. Marchese:** Oh, the first time in 10 years: \$3 per child. "We will end the clawback, but don't judge us on the promises we made; judge us on the three bucks we gave." That's what the Liberals want you to do. Each family would get \$2,800. If you eliminated the clawback, all they gave was three bucks per child.

So you have Mr. Duguid from Scarborough Centre, who's going to correct the record because all of you people there, living on the edge, are just dying to hear the fact that what he is giving you is enough for you and forget the promise to end the clawback. That first-year increase: a couple of bucks per child. He's proud to say, "More than anything the Tories used to do and, yes, less than the promise we made, but more than otherwise

would have been given by the Tories," and forget about the promise.

But you stand up, member from Scarborough Centre, and defend your record; defend the facts.

Then we have the issue of the cap on the hydro rates. My friend Kathleen from Don Valley West says, "Yeah, but Rosario, what was your position?" What matters more, member from Don Valley West, is your promise and your position. Your position was, "We would maintain the cap until 2006." Those are promises. You get into power, and then, "Oh, but the conditions are so, so different and, oh, we didn't quite know, so we had to do it." It's so hilarious to listen to Liberals each and every day. I find it so amusing.

On the housing front, So many Liberals, McGuinty and others, said, "We will create thousands and thousands and thousands of units for people who find themselves in this market unable to earn a living that would allow them to live somewhere that is decent. We will build affordable housing." I think you guys promised 14,000 units, if I'm not mistaken.

My buddy from Scarborough Centre says, "Judge us on the units we will build." He says, "We will have 2,400 units down the line somewhere." He says, "It takes a long time to get the shovel into the ground," and right he is. But to date, only 63 units—by your facts, the facts that you offer us—of affordable housing.

I tell you, fine Liberal members, you're on your third year, and soon you'll be confronting the electorate. But you'll be able to go to them and say, "The shovel will be in the ground after we've left politics. We might not be re-elected, but the shovels will be in the ground."

The member for Scarborough Centre says, "Judge us on the units we will build down the line." It just tires you. It just exhausts you to listen to them. Some 2,400 units are coming. I can't wait. They are coming, though. Those of you who need it, don't worry; they are coming. Just 63 units; it's a pitiful record. You ought to be ashamed, but because they can't say that, they say, "Oh, no, that's not true. The facts are different." The facts, by your record: 63 units; a shameful, shameful, pitiful record.

Talk about the member from London—Fanshawe, who stands up and talks about the great things they are doing in education—he and others—"Some \$6.2 billion for post-secondary education; the highest amount of support we have ever, ever seen." They make it appear—I have to switch to my other glasses, because I can't see you with these. The beauty of this is, it's \$6.2 billion, and they make it appear, my friends from Scarborough Centre and London—Fanshawe and others, that the \$6.2 billion is coming today.

**Mr. Duguid:** No, we don't.

**Mr. Marchese:** "No, we don't." This is why we need you to speak and lay it out. Put out the facts. They say \$6.2 billion is coming.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** Over five years.

**Mr. Marchese:** Écoutez, s'il vous plaît. S'il vous plaît.



By 2009-10, there will be \$6.2 billion. They make it appear as if somehow they are going to be re-elected. Why else would you make a promise that leads beyond 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010? You're only elected for four years. You've got to get another mandate in 2007. They make a promise that there will be \$6.2 billion down the line, in 2009-10. Who told you that you are going to be re-elected? Is there some kind of oracle that you have consulted, some Greek oracle you've consulted, that says you'll be here after 2007? You remember the Greek oracles, Madame la ministre. I don't know who you consult, but I would make a promise based on what I'm going to spend while I have the mandate.

You see, you borrowed a page from the federal Liberals, because the Liberals at the federal level do the same. They announce money for years and years to come in the future, with the assumption that they're just going to get re-elected. I don't know how they can be so presumptuous.

**Mr. Duguid:** I'm telling Reggie Johnson on you.

1740

**Mr. Marchese:** And I say to you, Brad Duguid, member from Scarborough Centre, that despite some increases, Ontario will still be well below the national average on per student funding this year. You know something else? Dramatic tuition fee hikes are coming.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** That's under the NDP.

**Mr. Marchese:** Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy. No. The hikes are coming. And McGuinty said the question is, how high? And your other minister of post-secondary education, the previous one: How high? They've got to go up. Students are paying—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Fifty per cent.

**Mr. Marchese:** Fifty per cent of what, Jimmy? You stand up when you get your two minutes, because I want to hear you—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Trinity-Spadina, when I'm standing, you know what you're supposed to do.

I'm interested in the debate, but it's the first name, repeated, that we should stay away from.

**Mr. Marchese:** No, you're quite right. You will observe, Speaker, that I give their names and often their titles, because the electorate has a fascination to know who people are, based on their names. I try to combine them as best as I can, and where I fail, you will help me; I know that.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy.

**Mr. Marchese:** Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy, the Minister of Tourism, I want you, in your two minutes, to stand up and say where tuition fees were when we were there and how high they went, if you have that. Minister of Tourism, give us the number, because I tell you this: Students are now paying five thousand bucks a pop if you're just in a regular program. If you're in a deregulated

program such as law here at U of T, you're going to get whacked with \$18,000 a year in tuition fees.

The Liberals think it's OK; the Tories thought it was lovely. The Liberals think it's great and we'll continue with that policy. You know what? We're not sure about deregulation; the minister wasn't quite clear on that. He says he needs to listen to advice from people.

But on the issue of tuition fee hikes, they're coming. Students are paying 43% of their education. Under a New Democratic government, it was 21%. We went from \$2,000 to \$5,000, and it's rising. Liberals are saying, "But you know what? Students have to pay their fair share." They are paying their fair share, and they cannot take the load any more. Not only does it tax them with social problems that some of you haven't reflected on, nor do you want to debate them, but students have to consider, once they leave their educational endeavours in university in this city and they've got a \$20,000 debt—and if you're in law, who knows what it is—whether or not they can get married, or at least when they might be able to marry, because if you're carrying \$40,000, \$50,000, \$60,000 or \$70,000, it's a whole weight to carry. It's a big economic weight, psychological weight, social weight. You Liberals are not thinking about that weight, but it will force students to consider whether they can marry, or when. It will force students to consider whether they will have two children versus one child. The debt is a big factor in terms of whether students will have one child or two. If people care about the fact that we have a declining birthrate, this is an issue. You might not think it's serious enough, but I think it's a serious one. They will have to make decisions based on, "Can we afford to have a car? Where do we live? Can we afford to have a house?" I tell you, with that kind of debt, only the rich boys and girls are going to be able to afford a house.

So when you gloat about, "Oh, we have so much that we are giving," if you have two parents working at Wal-Mart and earning \$34,000, they are not eligible for any grant. Two people working at Wal-Mart, earning \$34,000: not eligible. I presume they are wealthy.

What it means is that students are going to be able to borrow. They either have to go to the bank, as so many students have done and will continue to do, where you pay interest rates right away, or some day this government will make it easier for people to be able to borrow more and more, because that's OK; education is a beautiful thing. If you're loaded with debt, it doesn't matter; you'll be able to pay it off because you'll have a good job.

It is a big debt to carry. We have never seen that kind of load on students. Students are working part-time to make ends meet, and it affects their education, and nobody's thinking about that. Liberals are happy to say, "We'll be able to decrease the level of parental participation." That's great. From what to where, and what kind of support is that, except students will be able to get indebted further and further?

It's a big, big problem, this education issue, I tell you. We're talking about education. The Liberals are proud to



talk about education at the elementary and secondary levels. I say you have nothing to be proud of. You have made some investment in your first year and you're dragging it out for four years. I often complain about your capital announcements that you've made. The first year you announced \$200 million, and that was going to leverage \$3 billion, but no money was ever flowed. The following year, the minister announces \$275 million, and that would leverage \$4 billion. I wager that next year the minister's going to announce \$350 million and it will leverage \$6 billion, and on and on every year. Just announcements, reannouncements, reannouncements—that's all you get from this government.

This year alone, of the \$275 million this government has promised, this summer only \$75 million has been put toward the reconstruction of schools. We've got \$4.5 billion worth of problems, including 100 schools that have to be replaced because they're of no use whatsoever, and only \$75 million has been put up, as far as we know. It's not more than that, but it could be less. The government said, "We're going to do a review." We've already done a review of the capital dollars. We should be spending all of that \$250 million or \$275 million you wanted to spend today. We can't wait for another five-year review. So of the \$275 million you announced, only \$75 million has been spent, and the rest of the money won't be spent because you're doing a five-year review.

I think you get my drift. There are only announcements of money that never comes, and then the reviews and so on. It takes a lot of expertise to be able to dig out the facts and expose the problems of the promises.

Take special ed. When this government got elected, the Tories had a procedure in place to be able to identify special ed. The government gets elected; they wait 10 months to announce the money the board should have gotten. They announce it in July. A long while ago, in July, when all the kids were out, they announce \$100 million, and in August they claw back another \$100 million. Now we realize it's \$83 million, so it's possible they might have given \$17 million for the previous year. It's possible, but it's hard to say. Last year, as far as I know, not one cent was put back, in spite of the promise of the Liberals that they were going to do another review, a new application process, and they were only going to give \$50 million of the \$83 million or \$100 million they said they'd claw back—stole, I argue—from the boards.

You see, you can't believe anything these people say, because what they say and what they do are two different things. Not one cent last year was given for special ed, the most needy of students. We have big problems by way of the promises of this government. We need to expose them, and that's what we are doing. People need to see what the government claims they're doing. You need to remember the promises they made that were never kept, and you need to understand that what they say is never what they're doing. "Foul is fair, and fair is foul," said Shakespeare.

1750

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward–Hastings):** I was thrilled when this budget came out. I think every parent in this province worries about how their children will do in life: Will they be successful? Very clearly, we know that the key to success is education. We have seen, over an eight-year period, that the number of working families able to afford post-secondary, as a percentage, was going down and down and down. Sending a child to an out-of-town college or university is a \$15,000 to \$20,000 venture.

This budget very clearly targeted the fact that the key to good health care, the key to a clean environment, the key to every part of our society, depends on our young people doing well in the workforce. Industry will be created in Ontario, jobs will be created and industry will come from outside of this country, only if we have a highly skilled, well-trained workforce.

We have an education system in this province that had dropped to the point where I believe we were almost at the bottom in North America in terms of funding per pupil.

**Interjection:** Ten out of 10 in Canada.

**Mr. Parsons:** Yes, the lowest in Canada. About 58th out of 60 when you consider the US states and the Canadian provinces.

Now we have seen a commitment to rejuvenate the education system, to move us back. There is no reason in the world this province shouldn't be a world leader in education. We have the people; we just lacked, for eight years, a process that allowed them to get adequate funding.

In my community, we have Loyalist College, an excellent college—probably a better college since I left, but a great college, that has turned out thousands of graduates who have flourished in this province. But they were struggling, going into deficits, having to make decisions to cut programs. And when they cut programs, they were cutting opportunities for our youth.

This budget very clearly, for working families, means they can get the education their children need and deserve.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** I want to commend the member from Trinity–Spadina for his critique of the faults and broken promises of the McGuinty Liberal government.

One thing that struck me in his concluding remarks was he mentioned that you can't believe anything they say, in reference to the McGuinty Liberals. It struck me how true that is. We know they've broken 50 of the 230 promises that got them elected into government, but beyond that, the leader of the third party, Mr. Hampton, today in the House, in responding to a statement by the Minister of Energy where she was taking credit for bringing new power generation on stream—I give credit to the leader of the NDP, who pointed out that, in reality, the only real additional generating capacity that has been brought on stream was by the former Conservative government. Yet the minister stood in her place and took credit for those installations.



But that's not just unique to her; we see it all the time. I pointed out that the Attorney General quite frequently—and the Premier does the same thing—takes credit for things they had absolutely nothing to do with. The guns and gangs task force in the city of Toronto was created in 2002 by Chief Julian Fantino, yet this government and this minister stand up on a regular basis and take credit for it.

When we talk about honesty and integrity and truthfulness, there are certainly a lot of questions that can be validly raised about the current Liberal government. I don't have enough time to talk about the job situation: 42,000 manufacturing jobs lost in this province.

The Premier, when he is asked to respond to specifics, like Guelph, gets up and gives bad information. A company under investigation for fraud: he doesn't answer the question with respect to the communities that are affected, the families that are affected. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade does exactly the same. It's a shameful performance.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I listened very carefully to my colleague the member for Trinity-Spadina. He's the education, colleges and universities critic for the New Democratic Party caucus. I say this to Liberal backbenchers, many of whom do not have the years of experience here that Mr. Marchese has: They would be well advised to listen carefully and heed his warnings, because Mr. Marchese, the member from Trinity-Spadina, points out that we are denying thousands of young Ontarians—bright, talented people who have a great deal to contribute to this province and this country—post-secondary education because of the McGuinty Liberals' insistence on ever-escalating tuition costs, which leave university and college but the privilege of the very wealthy.

Mr. Marchese knows. He comes from an immigrant family, like so many others here. He watched his parents work hard—darned hard, incredibly hard—so that their kids, Mr. Marchese and his siblings, could go to college and university. Just as Mr. Marchese was the first generation of his family, as the child of immigrant parents, to go to college and university, his fear and our fear, as New Democrats, as we travel across campuses of colleges and universities in this province, is that the children of immigrant families currently on those campuses could be the last generation of their families to go to college and university because of this government's constant privatizing. Every penny of additional tuition is an increased element of privatization of what should be fully funded post-secondary education. I say don't reduce; abolish.

I know Mr. Marchese is busy. He's probably leaving here this evening to campaign with Sheila White, our candidate out in Scarborough, because we need Sheila White in here if we're going to protect young people from this government and its insistence on ever-higher tuition.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I'm very pleased and proud to speak in support of the budget. One of the things I am most proud of is the \$6.2-

billion investment in post-secondary education. I happen to have the pleasure of having Algonquin College in my riding. Let me quote you from Michael Barrett, who is the president of the Algonquin Students' Association and president of the College Student Alliance. He said, "The budget is very promising. It is a comprehensive, long-term plan that seeks to provide quality college education to more students. Premier McGuinty is developing a learning culture that will ensure the prosperity and future of Ontario."

We are in the second year of a tuition freeze. You compare that with the NDP. When they were in power, tuition went up by over 50%, which is really quite startling and quite outrageous. This plan, the \$6.2 billion, is not only going to allow more low- and middle-income students to have grant opportunities for their tuition, it's going to make post-secondary education more accessible.

On the health care front, I was very pleased to announce that the Queensway Carleton Hospital in my riding of Ottawa West-Nepean received its largest-ever operating increase of 21.5%, and just on Friday, Premier McGuinty and I announced that the Queensway Carleton Hospital's third phase of expansion, their capital project, is going ahead. It's going to be part of the five-year plan.

We're working with the health ministry to ensure that the Nepean Community Resource Centre receives some support for its health centre status. We've put more money into the Olde Forge to help senior citizens, great people like Barb Lajeunesse and Michael Mason, who do so much work for seniors. I'm proud to have the largest number of seniors per capita in all of eastern Ontario in my riding, and that's why I'm voting for this budget.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Trinity-Spadina has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Marchese:** And there's so much to say. I thank my friends and foes.

I just want to remind you that this government has flatlined 15 ministries, meaning the increases to their ministries are frozen, and many other ministries have had to take cuts. One especially, native affairs, had to take a 22% cut. Is it any wonder that we have problems in some of these ministries? Is it any wonder that we have been dealing with the Kashechewan situation, where for two years the government has known there was a problem—known or ought to have known—and they've done nothing? It speaks to the wilful negligence of this provincial government and the federal government. It speaks to the jurisdictional indifference of this provincial government and the federal government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I just caution the member to take it easy on the language, please.

**Mr. Kormos:** What the hell did you say?

**Mr. Marchese:** I said that I accuse this government of wilful negligence and jurisdictional—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'm just asking the member—I didn't ask him to withdraw, I'm just asking him to watch it.

**Mr. Marchese:** So when you cut ministries such as native affairs, you've got to deal with these problems. So

when our leader says, "We put up \$48 million in a deficit economy"—you have a good economy; you put up not one cent. You've got 15 other communities under a boil-water watch, where their water is contaminated, and you're doing nothing. You love to warm yourselves in jurisdictional indifference.

And then you're all so cozy about the fact that tuition fees have gone up from \$2,000 to \$5,000, and they're going higher and higher. You love the fact that tuition

fees are going to go higher and higher, and you think it's great.

We'll have the time to be able to debate these issues. There will be plenty of time to expose the problems of this government. I'm here to do that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being a little past 6 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Lundi 31 octobre 2005**

### **PREMIÈRE LECTURE**

<b>Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé (pompes à insuline pour diabétiques), projet de loi 15, <i>M. Gravelle</i></b>	
Adoptée.....	532
<b>Loi de 2005 sur la Réserve agricole de Duffins-Rouge, projet de loi 16, <i>M. Ramsay</i></b>	
Adoptée.....	532

### **DEUXIÈME LECTURE**

<b>Loi de 2005 sur les mesures budgétaires, projet de loi 197, <i>M. Duncan</i></b>	
Débat présumé ajourné.....	568

# CONTENTS

Monday 31 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute</b>	
Mr. Sterling.....	529
<b>Tornadoes in Centre Wellington and Mapleton</b>	
Mrs. Sandals .....	529
<b>Mnjikaning First Nation Early Childhood Education Centre</b>	
Mr. Dunlop .....	529
<b>Eid-Ul-Fitr</b>	
Mr. Qadri .....	530
<b>Lupus disease</b>	
Mr. Hudak.....	530
<b>Jeffrey Baldwin</b>	
Ms. Churley .....	530
<b>Unilever Canada</b>	
Mr. Kular .....	530
<b>Conservation</b>	
Mr. Racco .....	531
<b>Cenotaph in Lunenburg</b>	
Mr. Brownell .....	531

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Health Insurance Amendment Act (Insulin Pumps for Diabetics), 2005, Bill 15, Mr. Gravelle</b>	
Agreed to .....	532
Mr. Gravelle.....	532
<b>Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005, Bill 16, Mr. Ramsay</b>	
Agreed to .....	532

## MOTIONS

<b>Private members' public business</b>	
Mr. Bradley.....	532
Agreed to .....	532
<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley.....	532
Agreed to .....	532

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve</b>	
Mr. Ramsay .....	532
Mr. Miller .....	534
Ms. Churley .....	535
<b>Electricity supply</b>	
Mrs. Cansfield .....	533
Mr. Yakabuski .....	534
Mr. Hampton .....	535

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Economic policy</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	535
Mrs. Dombrowsky.....	536
<b>Adoption disclosure</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	536
Ms. Pupatello.....	536
<b>Water quality</b>	
Mr. Hampton.....	537, 538
Mrs. Dombrowsky.....	537, 538, 540
Mr. Miller.....	539
Mr. Ramsay.....	539
Mr. Barrett.....	540
<b>Violent crime</b>	
Mr. Hampton.....	539
Mrs. Dombrowsky.....	539
<b>School nutrition programs</b>	
Mrs. Mitchell.....	540
Mrs. Chambers .....	540
<b>Landfill</b>	
Ms. Churley.....	541
Mr. Wilkinson .....	541
<b>Domestic violence</b>	
Mr. Brownell.....	541
Ms. Pupatello.....	541
<b>Provincial deficit</b>	
Mr. Hudak .....	542
Mrs. Dombrowsky.....	542
<b>Chedoke long-term-care facility</b>	
Ms. Horwath.....	542
Mrs. Dombrowsky.....	543
<b>Gambling</b>	
Mr. Crozier.....	543
Mr. Watson.....	543
<b>Archives of Ontario</b>	
Mrs. Munro .....	543
Mr. Phillips.....	544
<b>Pension plan</b>	
Ms. Horwath.....	544
Mrs. Dombrowsky.....	544
<b>Mandatory retirement</b>	
Ms. Marsales .....	544
Mr. Peters.....	545

## PETITIONS

<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Yakabuski.....	545
<b>Diabetes treatment</b>	
Mr. Ramal .....	545
<b>Public transit</b>	
Mr. O'Toole .....	545
Mr. Delaney.....	546

## Community centre

Mr. Berardinetti .....	546
<b>Macular degeneration</b>	
Mr. Kular .....	546
<b>Municipal restructuring</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	546
<b>Adoption disclosure</b>	
Mr. Sterling.....	546
Mr. Yakabuski .....	547
<b>Immigrants' skills</b>	
Mr. Kular .....	547

## SECOND READINGS

<b>Budget Measures Act, 2005, Bill 197, Mr. Duncan</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	547, 550
Mr. Hoy .....	549
Mr. Miller .....	549, 562
Mr. Marchese.....	549, 552, 562, 563, 567
Mr. Fonseca .....	549
Mr. Ramal.....	550, 553, 563
Mr. Delaney .....	551, 562
Mr. Duguid .....	552
Mr. Jackson.....	552
Mr. Dunlop .....	552
Mr. Hudak.....	553, 563
Mr. Parsons.....	566
Mr. Runciman.....	566
Mr. Kormos .....	567
Mr. Watson.....	567
Debate deemed adjourned.....	568

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Visitors

Mr. Delaney .....	531
-------------------	-----

Continued overleaf





No. 12B

N° 12B

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 31 October 2005**

**Lundi 31 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Copies of Hansard**

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

### **Exemplaires du Journal**

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.





# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 31 October 2005

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 31 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ADOPTION INFORMATION DISCLOSURE ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 SUR LA DIVULGATION DE RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR LES ADOPTIONS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 25, 2005, on the motion for third reading of Bill 183, An Act respecting the disclosure of information and records to adopted persons and birth parents / *Projet de loi 183, Loi traitant de la divulgation de renseignements et de dossiers aux personnes adoptées et à leurs pères ou mères de sang.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member for Toronto–Danforth.

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** Once again, I'd like to welcome folks from the adoption community tonight who are back here to hear what we have to say. We should thank them—

*Applause.*

**Ms. Churley:** Yes, applaud them for all their hard work, because they are the reason we are here tonight, and they are the reason I continue to be inspired year after year, even though I had located my son through Parent Finders, not through the registry. But these are the people who kept on me and made me—although I was happy to do it—bring these private bills forward. They are the ones who continue to educate the public. They are the ones who are the experts, along with, may I say—and I'm not even going to use up my full time tonight—the children's aid societies. I have to say that we don't talk about them enough. We talk about the privacy commissioner a lot, who definitely has some views but admits herself that she's not an expert in this area and indeed it's outside her purview.

What we don't talk about very much at all—and I don't know if people who have concerns or are opposed to it even bothered to look at what the children's aid society had to say about the desperate need to open up those records, because they are the ones who, over the years, have dealt with all the slow changes in the law and have had to deal with all the fallout and issues and problems around what we have now. So that is something we need to pay attention to.

I also want to bring up again and remind you about the genetic revolution. Dr. Philip Wyatt, chief of genetics at the North York General Hospital, says that the current adoption disclosure laws put the “health of more than 300,000 Ontarians at risk.” We met some of those people, and I'm not going to go into details again tonight.

Fundamentally—and this is my last point—this is about human rights. I just want people to think for a moment about what happens after, or what used to happen after, an adoption. It's fraudulent. Supposing it were you, Mr. Speaker. You were born, and you were adopted right away. Your birth certificate would have been changed. Your real name would have been removed, and your adoptive parents' name would have been put on that. Adopted people are the only people we allow to be discriminated against in that way.

This is 2005. What we're doing here is catching up to most of the rest of the world. Yes, we don't have the disclosure veto; and yes, three provinces and a territory here in Canada have a disclosure veto. Mark my word, that will be gone soon. Western Australia, which is way ahead of us, as many other countries are, has just removed the disclosure veto.

That's the reality of what we're debating tonight. We're debating a human rights issue. We're debating the fact that there's a lot of misinformation out there, and we're debating the fact that this bill before us, as did all my bills, has a contact veto in there. These people sitting here tonight, their advice was: “Do not put a disclosure veto in here, because you continue to discriminate against some of us.” In correcting a wrong, you don't continue to carry on with that discrimination. It's not fair. You think about it.

If you're newly married or moving in or whatever, and you're having your first child, knowing about all the genetic diseases there are today, you want to find out. It's a blank slate. You don't know. We take it for granted. You want to know, before you have that baby or while you're pregnant with that baby, what kind of medical history there might be. You try to get that information, and guess what? Even if it's a small percentage—which is always the argument given as to why it's OK to have a disclosure veto—supposing that's you. You're having a child and you cannot find out your medical history. That is fundamentally wrong.

**1850**

I'm going to finish with this: If the people here who are opposed to this really did take the time to read children's aid information and all of the other information

put forward by all of the groups here, and look around the world and see how well the changes are working with the contact veto—all of these things, you see, we know. We happen to have the advantage because we're so far behind. We can study what's happened in other jurisdictions, like England, which changed its laws in the 1970s: no disclosure veto.

There will be some scary stuff said here again tonight—I can see it coming—about that fateful knock on your door. Just remember that adoption orders prior to 1969 or so had birth mothers' surnames on them. People, since 1995, can get the adoption records. Not the birth certificate—that's what this bill is about—but the adoption record, the adoption order. From 1995, you can already get that—an adoptee, a birth parent. So what we're doing is correcting at long last a mishmash of really, really invalid, discriminatory law that's patched together piecemeal and is no longer working for anybody.

We are finding each other actually outside that. Even without the contact veto we aren't showing up at people's doors, because we're walking on eggshells when we're trying to reconnect and get that information. That doesn't happen anyway. For insurance, for those who have that concern, the contact veto is there.

I'm going to be listening to the rest of the debate tonight and perhaps I'll have another opportunity to say a few more things about this bill, and I look forward to finishing the debate and what's going on here.

Should I keep going? OK. There are some negotiations, I believe, going on here, so I will let them continue to talk.

I'm coming to the end of my opportunities to speak to this bill because, as you know, it's serendipitous that the feds didn't call an election yet, and I'm still here and able to—

*Applause.*

**Ms. Churley:** You're happy I'm not in Ottawa yet, aren't you? But really, to be here in this House when we're finally going to have an opportunity to actually vote on the bill for third reading and bring it into law is something that I thought perhaps I wouldn't have the opportunity to see. To have the privilege of being here to participate in this final debate and the final vote is really very, very precious to me, and I look forward to that vote. I believe it's happening tomorrow, if all goes well.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** Or tonight.

**Ms. Churley:** Or tonight, people. We don't know, but we'll see what happens for the rest of the evening. Thank you for this opportunity.

**The Speaker:** Questions or comments? Further debate?

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I'm still not sure, sir—and I apologize—when one is supposed to stand up and take one's turn, and when one is not, here. Having said that, I'm delighted to be able to take part in this debate and to talk a little bit about what I've learned

about it as we've gone through the last number of months since this bill was introduced, which I think was the very day that I took my seat in the Legislature.

I voted in favour of this bill on second reading. I voted in favour of this bill because that is the stage at which one votes for approval in principle of the bill. The principle of the bill as I saw it, as I read it, as I listened to the minister talk when the bill was introduced, was more ease of access to information for birth parents and for adoptees. Indeed, I've had a number of friends who have gone through the process of trying to find out their own history and the identity of their own parents. The only association, in fact, I'd ever had with the issue in my life was as a professional, when I was practising law and on two occasions had a limited opportunity to help people who were at that time trying to find out more about their own history and background. So my only background was one where I was involved in helping people to achieve what the bill I think in principle was trying to achieve.

I should say as well that I was moved by, and paid attention to, the dozens and dozens of e-mails. I had no hesitation in saying to the media when they asked me what the preponderance of the e-mails I received in my office was on this piece of legislation. Many of them came from people who are from what the member for Toronto–Danforth referred to earlier as the adoption community, and they were speaking very strongly in favour of Bill 183.

I wondered for a period of time why I didn't receive any e-mails to speak of from people who had a concern of one kind or another about the bill. It was only—again, I've said this publicly; I don't think there's any point in being less than transparent about this—when the privacy commissioner telephoned me one day to talk about some of her concerns and observations about this legislation and to draw attention to the fact that she had in fact received hundreds of e-mails and letters from people who really felt they had no other way to communicate—because, of course, the very reason for their communication, their own history with respect to their experiences in this area, was that they were people who didn't want to reveal their identities. Their very concern about the bill was rooted in a privacy issue. They had come to understand that they had certain rights, and this bill was seeking to change that.

With the advent of those e-mails and those conversations with the privacy commissioner and others, I began to do what the Leader of the Opposition is here to do, together with my colleagues, which is to ask the tough questions about those kinds of things; to ask the tough questions that arose out of some of those e-mails, many of which I have now had an opportunity to read—of course, the vast majority of them don't have names attached to them; to speak up for groups who may well have felt left out as a result or that their considerations were being left out of the government's deliberations or the Legislature's deliberations with respect to this piece of legislation; and ultimately to do what I think Par-



liament is here to do, but to do in particular what I think the opposition is here to do, where there's any concern at all: to protect minority rights, especially given the huge latitude and the authority that is given to a majority government in our parliamentary system.

I think the question justifiably arises, what questions did we ask, which groups did we ask them about, and what rights did we inquire about during the course of the time that we have made inquiries in the House and since the time that I cast a vote on second reading in favour of this bill? I'll cover these in no particular order. I think they're just in the order, in some respects, in which they came to my attention as I was involved in a learning process about this bill.

Issue number one: retroactivity. I think that most people accept the fact that it is a fairly well established principle of our system that retroactivity is something to be avoided, in terms of retroactive impact of legislation. Indeed, if you read some of the comments—I had a chance to read them, but I don't have the time tonight to recite them—made by members now on the government side, from the Liberal Party, with respect to the lack of desirability of retroactivity in legislation, they were very harsh indeed in their condemnation of the previous government with respect to even the hint of retroactivity in legislation.

It was perhaps put best by Bruce Pardy, a law professor at Queen's, who submitted a legal opinion on a number of aspects of this bill, but he covered as well the question of retroactivity. He said, "Retroactive laws punish citizens for relying on rules which were in effect at the time of their actions."

Even then, I am willing—I can speak for myself, and I think that a number of the people in our caucus would be willing—to accept a measure of retroactivity in respect of the matter that's in front of us here, subject to some kind of safety valve, some kind of check and balance—that's such an important part of our system and of legislating in our system—which would allow those who relied on the rules as they were at any given point in time in the past, and those who may wish to continue to rely on the rules as they were when this affected them, to opt out of this retroactive application.

Let me make it clear, if it isn't already: I have no problem whatsoever with the provisions of this bill as it relates to adoptions that would take place today and going forward. I'm speaking on behalf of myself as a member of this Legislature. I have no problem with that. It is when you get into the zone of retroactivity, something that we choose more often than not to avoid in our law-making, that you get into a problem where you are altering retroactively the privacy rights of some people.

1900

Indeed, the only quote from the Liberal side that I am going to recite tonight is one that really sums up my own feelings on this to some extent. It comes from the Minister of Tourism, the government House leader, spoken in the House on May 12, 1994:

"In addition to this, I worry about the birth mother or the birth parents who have made a decision at an early stage in their lives, only to have, many years later when they've had a new life out there, made a new start, somebody knocking on the door and saying: 'Guess who's here? I'm here to see you.' It's a great disruption for that person's life."

The minister can speak for himself with respect to what he was talking about, but I believe he was talking about retroactivity and its particular negative impact on the person involved and the lack of a check or balance that applied in some respects to this retroactive application of the law, or, put even more simply, just the ability on the part of those who went through an experience based on a certain set of rights to stick with those rights as they are and as they were, so that people don't find themselves in a situation, as Professor Pardy described it, where the rules are being changed, as it were, after the fact, in the middle of the game.

I really wonder why, even as a major incremental step forward, we couldn't have gone to a retroactively applied opening up of this information, as I believe was the principle of the bill—to open it up and make information more easily available to people on all sides—but with a full disclosure veto for the retroactive cases with concerns.

Based on the evidence and the experience elsewhere in Canada, I think I'm right in saying that that would have meant that 97% of the files would have been opened, pursuant to the operation of this bill, and that information would have been made available to those who are looking for it on any side of all this, and rights to information would have been enhanced. But at the same time we would have respected and addressed the rights of the minority with a veto, a system where you have your privacy rights respected and don't have to beg for them or go to some extraordinary lengths to try to have them just respected by the government and by the Legislature of Ontario.

I would argue that that would have been a win-win. It would not have been a perfect solution—nor, I would argue, is this one—but it would have advanced the cause of making this information more readily available in 97% of the cases. For example, I would have been quite happy, again speaking for myself, to see that kind of arrangement in place, say, for a three-year period, with a review to take place after that, and we could see if this balancing of rights was working and whether we could afford at that stage to do more. That's issue number one.

I want to quote from one of the letters—I've read a lot of them—that the privacy commissioner received. This was letter number 32 that came from a birth parent. She's numbered them because, of course, most of them don't have names. She says, "The Liberal government is taking away my privacy rights by bringing in adoption disclosure retroactivity. I based my whole life on being told my file would always be sealed.... It is unbelievable they would go that far back to turn families upside down."



I think that what we have from the minister is really no assurances. I'm going to make some comments in a moment about positive things I've heard from the minister, but there are no assurances that we aren't going to end up turning the lives of these people upside down, notwithstanding her own statement, that I think was an acknowledgement of the fact that this law, as presently drafted, will turn lives upside down. As she put it in her statement introducing the bill, "These files have been sealed for 87 years." That means, by definition, that there are people who have relied on the fact that the files have been sealed for 87 years, and when they're opened, with no real opportunity for many of these people to come and make their case as to how their privacy rights are being interfered with, I think that is the circumstance in which letter number 32, the woman writing there, is saying it is going to turn her life upside down.

Let me deal with the second issue: namely, privacy rights. The right to privacy is a personal right. These privacy rights have been given in the past, and now, with the stroke of a pen, they are being taken away. Again, it speaks sort of to the issue of retroactivity, but it's a different, related issue.

I don't believe that it is up to a government or a majority party in government to do that: to take away privacy rights that have been granted with the stroke of a pen.

These rights are more fundamental than that. Again, it was put quite well by an adoptee who wrote to the privacy commissioner in letter 292. She said as follows: "The bigger issue is that the government has no right to disclose this information in the first place, as it tries to define who my parents are against my wishes." It would have been so much easier—not easy, but it would have been easier, fairer and more appropriate, in terms of our role here as legislators, to respect those rights for those who wish to preserve and to protect them. It still would be, because this bill hasn't yet been passed.

I'll read another quote from the letter: "Shouldn't the government be protecting my privacy rights instead of requiring me to justify why my private information should not be disclosed?"

Another letter, number 38: "I was promised this in a courtroom before a judge, represented by a lawyer, a frightened teenager who was still living the nightmare of an unwanted pregnancy. So when I was promised this, while on the stand in this courtroom, surrounded by people more learned than me, was I supposed to know that this promise had no legal basis, and would be discarded so willingly by the government decades later?"

Finally, from letter 272: "In those days, our word was our bond. This bill, even with its amendment, is a betrayal to the women that we promised to protect."

Those sentiments sum up, perhaps better than I could, the notion that we are seeing here a unilateral interference with, and lack of respect for, privacy rights that people had. These are their rights, which they should be asked to give up—if they're going to give them up at all—as opposed to being told that they're now being giv-

en up on their behalf by the government and by this Legislature.

The third issue is what I call begging for your rights to be respected. Whether it's the birth mother who was the victim of a sexual assault or incest, or the adoptee who was abused, or just someone who feels that real emotional trauma or harm will come to them if their most private secrets are retroactively caused to be revealed, why should people have to appear in any of those circumstances to beg for their rights? For that matter, if privacy rights are privacy rights, why should anyone have to appear in front of a tribunal and beg for their rights at all? These are their rights.

We have been given various, what I will call—because I believe that they are—vague assurances on this by the minister. It may even be that we could have been satisfied with some parts of the proposed process. I will say that I believe the intention that is in the minister's mind, from what I've heard her say, in what I'll call the more extraordinary cases—the cases involving what I think we would all clearly describe as extraordinary circumstances involving sexual assault and incest and so on. I believe that the process that she has described—in only the vaguest of detail—is intended to address those instances, albeit we have some serious, ongoing concerns about whether people are going to be required to appear there to plead for their rights. The minister has said many times in this House that they won't, and I take her at her word on that, but I think it underlines the point that we've made, which is that we could have been satisfied with this process as representing an answer to many of these cases but for the fact that all they were told is that it is a process that will be shaped and governed by regulations we have not seen, which are not drafted, which we will not be able to see for some considerable period of time to come, based on the answers to the questions that I tried to ask in the Legislature today.

The minister has said—and again, I take her at her word, and we were just chatting about it a couple of moments ago. She has given me some assurance that there could be an opportunity for someone like myself or members of all the parties—in fact, it shouldn't be about the Leader of the Opposition or any other one parliamentarian; it should be about all of us having a chance to participate in this in an appropriate manner. In the end, there have been no draft regulations, no really specific answers giving any kind of comfort or assurance. There has been no draft consultation; there's been no commitment to produce a draft after the bill is passed, if indeed it is passed by this House when the vote comes up, likely tomorrow; there has been no real consultation, no paper, no nothing.

I wanted to discuss, in the time left to me, what we asked for as a party, in terms of going through this discussion as we tried to address ourselves to issues of retroactivity, privacy rights and people having to beg for their rights. In no particular order, we asked for regulations governing who would have to appear where to plead for their rights. We asked, as recently as this



afternoon, that the minister might—all I asked her to do was to bring them forward before the bill was voted upon in the Legislature. I asked her to commit to bring them forward in an appropriate manner for review and consultation before the bill is proclaimed. That's what I asked this afternoon.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** You can't do that.

1910

**Mr. Tory:** If the bill is passed—I asked you to bring it forward before it was proclaimed. If you tell me it can't be done—there are a lot of things people say can't be done around here, based on convention. If we wanted Parliament to work a lot better, we should stop saying that things can't be done and start to look for better ways to do things that involve all members of the Legislature. The bottom line, as evidenced by the minister's comment just now, is that that request was rejected.

The second thing we asked for was consideration of a disclosure veto on retroactive cases. Open the future files: I have no issue with that. I don't have; I haven't had any issue with that, nor have many other members of our party.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tory:** Open the past files—

**The Speaker:** Stop the clock. Minister, I'm going to need you to withdraw that last remark.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** I withdraw.

Be honest, John.

**Mr. Tory:** "Be honest." I try to be honest all the time. I didn't even hear the previous comment, Mr. Speaker, but never mind. It's what we're trying to fix up around here.

In any event, open the past files but respect the rights of those who wish to continue to rely on those rights and the assurances and guarantees they were given in the past. That is what I described as the win-win scenario. That was rejected.

A court reference: We asked about that and said, "In view of the fact that there were serious concerns raised by various people about the legality of this bill, could we have an objective opinion rendered by a judge within a reasonable period of time and then the bill could proceed after that reference to the court?" That was rejected.

I believe that that, and some of the interjections of the last couple of minutes, are not Parliament as it should work. I believe there really wasn't any serious willingness to consider serious amendments to address some of these concerns expressed by the official opposition on behalf of many people and groups of people out there. I believe there is, to this minute, no willingness at all to let the public see the draft regulations.

This is a bill which the government itself chose to amend dozens of times. I've only been here a short time, but people tell me that the number of amendments made to this bill is very great indeed.

The Toronto Star editorial of October 27 said as follows: "Surely there are better ways to open the adoption process without trampling on individual rights and

reopening old wounds. Until the Ontario Legislature addresses these issues, this bill should be firmly rejected."

I voted for this bill on second reading because I approved of the principle of what it was trying to accomplish. We've asked a lot of questions and we've made a lot of requests of the government since that time. I would like to be able to vote for it on third reading, and I hold out hope, even in the remaining hours, that this minister might decide that some of the points that we and others have raised are worthy of consideration. But the fact is that there hasn't been, really, any tangible indication of concern for these people and their rights. They are a minority, to be sure—I concede that point—but that's precisely why we're up talking about those people and their rights. If I thought that there was a real, sensitive, simple way someone could protect their own privacy rights under this bill or under some change that this minister would have seen fit to put forward in respect of this bill, then that would have resulted in a much different kind of approach being taken by this party when the time for the vote comes.

"Trust us," they say. "Don't worry; be happy," they say. "It will all work out in the end. It has worked out elsewhere." Too bad for the people we're really worried about.

The minister said, when she introduced the bill, that it was a result of a carefully considered balance that she had achieved in drafting the bill. I would say to you that if there had been the slightest nod, the slightest indication that they were going to respect us, respect the Legislature and respect this minority group and their privacy rights, I would vote for this legislation, but I don't really think that is what we have seen. Instead, we're getting what amounts to—with a couple of vague assurances otherwise—the back of the majority government hand.

The Toronto Star was right. In its present form, I don't think we have any alternative but, on this side, to reject this bill as it now stands. I say that with regret, but I say it nonetheless.

**The Speaker:** Questions or comments? Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I'm going to speak to this bill on third reading for a far briefer period of time than I normally would. Quite frankly, it's because I'm enthusiastic about the bill coming to a vote this evening. It has been a decade for Ms. Churley and folks across the province—

**Ms. Churley:** Longer.

**Mr. Kormos:** —who have pursued this legislation, and far in excess of a decade for so many of those same people who have, as adult children, sought to obtain what I believe is rightly theirs.

While I regret the fact that it took 10 years for the legislation proposed by my colleague the member from Toronto-Danforth to finally come to this point in the House, I don't regret that there's been a thorough debate around the issues. I'm not afraid, quite frankly, of the contra view, and I want people to understand that the contra view has been an important contribution to the



debate, because there are people who have concerns about the legislation and what it will mean to them. I don't think there is any of us who doesn't understand what some of those fears are. Those interests, in my view, have been thoroughly canvassed and spoken to by those people who have expressed concern about the legislation. I want to make that very clear. We should understand that members of this assembly, in any number of caucuses, perform a variety of roles, and I'm very pleased that the opponents of this legislation have had a voice in the course of the debate. I think that's incredibly important.

I look at this from a relatively simplistic—my critics will say, typical of me—perspective. One, I agree that there is a privacy interest which may well be a privacy right on the part, obviously, of a birth mother who has undergone what has to be—and I don't pretend to even come close to being able to identify with the pain, the sense of sacrifice and the tremendous love that has to accompany a birth mother acknowledging that somebody else is better equipped at that point in her life to care for her child. I don't begin to try to pretend that I can understand that incredible love and sacrifice by those women.

I'm old enough to understand a time in our history, provincially and nationally, when the stigma of youthful pregnancies, when the stigma of an unmarried woman being pregnant—and in hindsight, we reflect that it's just so sad, there were so many lost opportunities, because we allowed ourselves to be buried under this burden, to be forced to bear this incredibly naive stigma. I recall it from my youth, through my adolescence even. Regrettably, there are obviously some people in some places who would force that stigma upon people in those situations now.

But having said all of that, this is what I really believe: While there is, in my view, a valid privacy interest and, yes, in all likelihood a privacy right, there is a competing right in these cases; that is, the right of every person to understand who they are; that one's biological history, one's antecedents, are the property of that child, be she or he a youthful child or an adult—children are, too, parents—even in the senior years.

While I can't identify with the incredible pain and sacrifice, and love of a mother who acknowledges that somebody else is better equipped to care for her baby, I think all of us, if only through our life experience and the passions we've felt around who we are, who our families are, where we came from, why somebody has green eyes and why somebody has blue eyes and, more importantly, why somebody laughs the way they do or has a gesture or an affectation and then to understand that there was an uncle, a great-uncle, a grandfather or a grandmother who had that very same laugh or had that very same talent, the ability to paint beautiful pictures or sing beautiful songs—these are fundamental rights of every child, youthful or adult. This is the property of that child.

1920

So I say, yes, there may well be a right to privacy, but I believe also that that right to privacy is as much derived

from the ongoing stigmatization about a youthful pregnancy or the pregnancy of an unmarried woman; that's what it's really about. If anything, we have to speak out loudly and clearly that whether it was our sister or mother or grandmother, 40, 50 or 60 years ago, or our sister today who becomes pregnant for any number of reasons or circumstances—we know how people get pregnant—it surely shouldn't be the source of shame or finger pointing. Good grief. As wonderful a thing as can be done is to create that life.

I believe that a person's identity, which includes information about their antecedents, which includes not just the hard biological data—because Ms. Churley has made a very clear and strong case about the right of a person to know what their health background is so that he or she can protect themselves from predispositions that are genetically bred into them—and not just themselves, but they can protect their children as well—and also to know who those people were.

It's for that reason that I support this legislation. It's for that reason that I join my colleagues in the New Democratic Party in having advocated for this legislation for a good chunk of time now. It's for that reason that I believe the non-contact provisions in and of themselves are sufficient.

I know this. I know that in 2005, there just aren't any secrets any more. Birth children have been finding their birth parents for years, sometimes in a context of an unrestrained process that can have less than positive results in contrast to a disciplined and orderly process.

I spent a considerable amount of time over the last few years—I have a wonderful, beautiful cousin. Her name is Kim Stifel. She's a couple years younger than I am. She moved to Florida with her mother when her mother relocated to Florida back in 1960. I spent a whole lot of time with Kim. She had come back up here to Niagara. She was born in Niagara region, where I'm from. We would be poring over city directories, because we had all the little clues. Kim, in relatively short order, with no high-priced private investigators, found her mother, found her brother and, bless everyone, it was a delightful reunion for everybody involved.

But surely a regime which recognizes the right of a child to know his or her birth parent—and that doesn't in any way displace the adoptive parents, because you understand they have important roles as well—does far more to recognize the dignity of the person than any restrictive regime which purports to protect an interest, which I say, after a whole lot of reflection, has to be secondary or subservient to the competing interest.

Yet it happens more than once. In our society, when you talk about rights, we have competing rights, and you either deny all parties their right or you have to very carefully, thoroughly and cautiously analyze those competing rights and determine whether one shall prevail. While I have listened to and understand the contra arguments, I am convinced that the prevailing right has to be the right of the child, the birth child, and for me, it's that simple and, quite frankly, that easy.



It has to be retroactive, because the fact is, it's irrelevant when you talk about "from this point forward." The whole world has changed so dramatically. We have open adoptions now. Quite frankly, we don't have the element of secrecy. In the rare adoptions that are being done in this country, we don't have the element of secrecy. There isn't the element of shame attached to the clandestine delivery—my God, those days were horrible; they certainly weren't the good old days—of a pregnant daughter off to some special place 100 miles away so the neighbours would never find out. We can't even come close to ever pretending to delight in those days or in those times or in those attitudes.

I think Bill 183 changes the culture dramatically and celebrates once again the strength, the courage and the love of those mothers who handed their babies over, knowing that those other people could raise their babies more effectively than them at that point in their lives. I think this is a good piece of legislation, which I'm looking forward to being passed on third reading and proclaimed.

**The Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** I was interested in the member's points with regard to his belief that the child had greater rights than an actual mother. In that vein, I'd like to introduce Joy Cheskes, who is sitting in the members' gallery over here, who is an adoptee. She is one of the very few people in this province who is part of the process who has been willing to step forward. If you follow the previous member's logic, you would say then that Ms. Cheskes should be given the opportunity to block the disclosure of her personal information. This legislation does not allow her that right. So his argument is flawed in picking one side or the other in terms of this particular bill.

I apologize to Ms. Cheskes for not introducing her the other night when we were debating this bill. She's been here through thick and thin. Ms. Cheskes has been contacted by, I believe, over 100 adoptees and natural parents, natural mothers, who do not want to see this legislation go through. I was sitting with her when the first speaker was speaking, when she pointed to the group over here as the adoptive community. She didn't point over here to include Ms. Cheskes as part of the adoptive community, and she does represent a significant minority of people who want to have the right to a veto disclosure.

We must consider not only the people who have spoken in the past and who continue to speak now, but we also must consider the minority—in many cases, the silent minority—who we in this party are defending.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I'm pleased to speak on this bill and to support my colleague in helping us enter the 21st century on this issue. I'd like to remind the honourable members of the opposition that there are protections for those specific families that wish their privacy to be protected. We have more protections in this bill than existed in the past, in

fact. That has to be applauded, and I applaud my colleague for that.

Let me speak to another bill I introduced when I was minister of children, and that was for more support for those adoptions that are occurring now within children's aid to mirror what is happening out in the private adoption agencies, where open adoption is just the way it is. Research shows that kids want to know what their past is. It doesn't mean they don't love the parents who raised them.

I have a daughter who's 14. She's beautiful, she's smart; I can't believe she's mine. A lot of family members can't believe she's mine. I'm thinking to myself, "Would I ever give her up?" Even if I found out that there's another baby somewhere else that perhaps could have been mine, absolutely not. You love that baby. People understand that today. People understand these issues today. There is protection against those who require more privacy. There is a respect for the research that shows we need to know where we came from and there's a respect for those young moms, those honourable moms who, with love, gave away their children, to know how they are today. There's a respect for that.

I applaud my colleague. This is the right bill. I'm so embarrassed when I hear people like the honourable Leader of the Opposition, who supported this, now go back on his word. This is more like abuse than anything else.

*Interjections.*

1930

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** You can heckle all you want. I know what the right thing is here, and this bill is the right thing to do. I applaud my colleague, I applaud my government, and shame on you over there.

**Ms. Churley:** I'm listening carefully to the arguments—a particular name was mentioned here tonight and I acknowledge your presence—and I certainly don't dismiss those concerns that are brought forward. I guess my argument would be, because I do want to address all the concerns, including yours, is that—and we've said it repeatedly here. I come at it from the perspective of a birth mother, and I know that that is different from the adoptee. I can only relate to my son and his experience in actually having my name. I guess that is what this issue is all about when you're trying to balance and weigh it all. "Churley" is a very uncommon name. I used to be a minister responsible for elevators and my name was in every elevator in the province, and he used to see my name. He could have come down to my cabinet office and declared, "I'm your son." I wouldn't have minded, but I know that there are some who would have, and I recognize all of that.

That is indeed what we are talking about here, that over the years the processes that exist now mean that it is fairly likely—and it's happening more and more. We all know people on all sides of this. They're finding each other through these other methods: through the Internet, because it has exploded these days; through having the birth mother's surname on the adoption order and being



able to get that not just from your adoptive parents but, since 1995, being able to quietly write in and get it, whether you're an adoptee or a birth mother. Now you have that contact veto in there as people are finding each other, which doesn't exist now. I acknowledge that there are concerns around this on both sides. The reality is, people are finding each other. There is a protection in this bill that doesn't now exist.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I just want to rise really in response to a comment made by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs; which I think, in this place, is uncalled for. To refer to honourable members in this place who happen to disagree with her on a position and call on them in the way that she did, I think shows great disrespect for the process in this place. In doing so, she refers as well to an officer of this Legislature in the same tone. I remind her that an independent, impartial officer of this Legislature, Ann Cavoukian, the privacy commissioner, shares the Leader of the Opposition's view on this very issue. It shows a disrespect for members of this place. It shows the arrogant attitude of this government, that everyone else is wrong and they are always right.

Speaker, I submit to you that if it has come to this place where a minister of the crown presumes that any member who proposes an alternative or proposes an improvement to legislation—that that is a shameful act. This government has come a long way in the wrong direction. I think if anyone had honour, the minister would stand in her place and withdraw her comment directed to the leader of the official opposition.

**The Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I'm pleased to be able to comment in the House this evening on Bill 183. In my 21 years in the Legislature, I have had occasion to speak in this House on at least a half-dozen occasions. And those who bear witness to Hansard would know that I happen to be someone who feels very strongly about the inherent value of repatriating families, the exchange of information, and that there is an important role for government to make sure that that process is done with the greatest degree of sensitivity and with the greatest understanding of its impact on those families and individuals it affects.

Again, for new members of the Legislature, you may not have had the same number of cases come through your constituency office as, say, Marilyn Churley has or I have. I've assisted families to find family members. I even had two sisters who had exactly opposite experiences with the same mother. I learned a lot from adoptees and birth parents in their struggle to retain a degree of their identity and to connect something that they have always felt was missing inside of them. So I feel very strongly and have very strong opinions about how that should be done.

I've also put on the record that I'm not having as great a deal of difficulty with retroactivity, even though the principle is a very awkward one in our society and it's a very difficult one, legally. Even our federal charter makes commentary in its short, 20-some-odd-year history

that the issue of retroactivity has to be dealt with very carefully. When we're dealing with social policy and with high-risk, emotional responses, we should proceed carefully. That does not necessarily mean we should reject retroactivity simply for its case, but for those who express concern about retroactivity, we at least have to listen to their case.

It's apparent after months of public hearings, and—I'll say it tonight—after 45 amendments that I tabled to this legislation, almost all of them rejected, after that effort to try and amend and make this bill better, without disrupting the principle of retroactivity, we still have a government willing to proceed and go forward, in spite of the fact that they've been given all sorts of evidence and caution that this bill, in the present form we're being asked to vote on tomorrow, will not only be challenged in our courts, but most of the legal opinions—in fact, we did not get a single legal opinion that said that this legislation would be sustained on appeal. With all of that evidence, why is it that this government is proceeding with a bill that we've got clear legal evidence will be struck down? And why, more importantly, did this government, given the opportunity to strengthen and make this bill better, fail to even try?

That's been bothering me for some time. It bothers me because I have several constituents who want this to go through. I have several constituents who are desperate about the unintended consequences that this legislation will have on their lives, on their families and on their future health. From that perspective, I tabled a substantive number of amendments. I'm going just to briefly hit on a few that have not been mentioned at all in the debate, but that, in my view, as I listened carefully to the comments of people both pro and con for this legislation, were issues that they said needed to be left or put into the bill to make it better legislation, to make it work better. Yet today we stand here with this legislation and not one privacy commissioner in Canada, either nationally or in any province, supports it, and they have serious legal concerns about its validity and its impact. They are clearly signalling that this will ultimately go to the Supreme Court to be tested.

We have not one editorial comment from any newspaper. The media normally like to support this government in just about anything it does. There was not one editorial support for this legislation in the form in which it was proposed and the form in which it remains in front of us tonight, unamended.

**1940**

I believe very strongly that we should have made some amendments here, and in doing my homework I did one of those simplest of things. It occurred to me that after weeks of the minister getting up and trumpeting and parroting the fact that New South Wales has done this piece of legislation and it's just a wonderful, magnificent piece of work, I thought, "Fine." I went on the Internet, called up the legislation and read it through. I was shocked to learn that there were a substantive number of protections put in the New South Wales legislation, so I



did what any normal person would do: I copied them down. I thought, "Well, if the minister thinks they're so wonderful in Australia, surely she must want to transport those elements and bring them here to Ontario, along with this principle of retroactivity"—and this other issue I'll get to in a moment, the no-contact versus the disclosure veto.

This bothered me. These weren't the Conservative Party amendments; they weren't Cam Jackson's amendments; this was the legislation the minister held up as one of the best pieces of legislation in the world. The truth is, it's the only legislation of its type in the world, but that's a matter of record. Fine; if the minister wants to emulate the best legislation, in her mind, in the world, then surely she shouldn't have cherry-picked that legislation to come up with something so narrow and so un-Canadian that it fits into our judicial context of a Charter of Rights and Freedoms to protect individuals in this country.

Why would she do that? Why would she put this legislation, let alone her government, through all this, if at the end of the day it's in the courts and our adoption community is no closer to access to their loved ones or those whom they seek to be connected to, and this will cause further delays? Only the minister can answer why she believes her way is the only way, in spite of compelling evidence.

I'm not going to read in all the legal opinions. We had strong, emotional, cogent, legally researched input during the several days of public hearings. Clayton Ruby said, "I'm telling you right now, ladies and gentlemen, if the bill goes through this way we're taking it all the way to the Supreme Court, and my client to my left, an adoptee, is adamant that his rights be protected." So, two, three, maybe four years from now we're still going to be debating this, because we will not be able to give full force and proclamation to a piece of legislation that's going to be challenged in our courts.

One of the things that is missing here that nobody wants to talk about is the fact that this government in this legislation is collapsing and stepping away from any responsibility that the current community and social services ministry has in terms of the process of record-keeping, assisting with matches and all of those procedural efforts. So I asked some questions: "What is it that you expect to do?" According to the minister, again, they're going to be collapsing this portion of the ministry, and this will become now a budgetary savings for the government. That was the answer I got. I said, "OK, children's aid societies have records, and I have concerns about crown wards." Frankly, in New South Wales they have concerns about crown wards, and it's in their legislation. Do we have it in our legislation? Absolutely not. I do not know why we don't, but again, I agree with the member from Welland that the child who was put up for adoption should have some unique rights here. If I were a child put up for adoption and I was physically molested by a family member or someone, I would like to be able, as an 18-year-old in this province, to deter-

mine when my information gets released and to whom, and to what degree I am protected. Those amendments were rejected out of hand, and not only that, but I asked in the legislation here—our caucus tabled motions—that children's aid society records should be made available to an 18-year-old so they could make their own determinations, and again the government rejected them.

Now, imagine this scenario—which was presented to the committee through the hearings: You're a young woman, and as a child you were sexually molested in the most gruesome of ways and yet you've suppressed all of this. You're not totally aware of it, but the state has the responsibility to at least inform you, "(a) You were adopted, and (b) you were adopted for these reasons, and this is the truth about what you're going through." Now, children generally start having problems with this as children, but it becomes more acute as young adults. There's no mechanism in this legislation whatsoever to assist that very small group of individuals (a) to bridge them with the information, or (b) to provide them access to counselling. Even the adoption community came to me and said, "Cam, could you put in this amendment?" Right now, you can get access to counselling. The government is eliminating all this. In New South Wales, you can get counselling. People are going to need counselling as a result of being told, "As of a certain date, your entire information that you thought was secret and held sacred is going to be released." But what about those people who have no idea of the circumstances which caused their adoption? Some of those stories are terrible and they're horrific.

I asked for something that was simply laid out in the New South Wales legislation: that, for a person who really doesn't want anyone to have their information, at least give them six months to a year so that they can go out and start telling their family members, they can get some counselling, they can share it with their husband or their wife and their children. There's nothing in this legislation. This was all rejected by the government: something specifically that a large number of people in the adoption community said they would support.

This one upset me: when the government, and in particular the minister, said that under no circumstances was any woman ever promised that by putting her child up for adoption, those records would be kept secret. If you've ever done any work with the Catholic Children's Aid Society, you know that that was part of the process; that was part of the promise. Some were done in a courtroom, some were signed, and the most difficult decisions were made by women. I can only imagine how difficult a decision would be to determine whether to have an abortion or bring a child to term, and part of that decision would have been made by some of these women, they tell us, as a result of the promise that the child would be allowed to be adopted and there would be no record kept.

I will close with my major concern with this legislation, and that has to do with the very small group—and I want to put it on the record. When we talk about a



disclosure veto on this side of the House, we take it very seriously. When we did our research in New South Wales, we found out that fewer than 5% of adoptees or birth parents seek a disclosure veto. So we are not talking about a lot of people, which is why I'm not having a great difficulty with the retroactivity of it, and fuller access and disclosure. But I am having a problem for that small, small percentage of Ontario residents who have very legitimate reasons for not wanting disclosure. It has to do with a woman's right not to be revictimized in this province, and I feel strongly about this.

1950

My wife, Elaine, and I brought three daughters into this world, and all of my work has been primarily focused on trying to understand what the world would be like for my three daughters. I say that, for women who were sexually assaulted or physically abused—and it is a disproportionate number of them; we know that. As children, as young adults, as adolescents and as adults, women are disproportionately victimized.

I helped to create legislation under the Victims' Bill of Rights that says one basic principle: A woman has the right not to be revictimized. In other words, she has the right not to have to go before a tribunal and relive the circumstances of her victimization. That is entrenched in our law. It's also part of the law that will be taken to the Supreme Court when this legislation, Bill 183, is challenged.

Women have fought hard to win the right not have to go back into civil court after there has been a criminal conviction in a rape. Now we have a process here that says that a woman who was raped or abused has to go and plead her case—not how badly she suffered during that rape or that assault, but she has to prove to a panel of civil servants in this province—

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** That's not true.

**Mr. Jackson:** You never answered the question, Minister. If you'd have answered the question—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jackson:** You left it open. You were asked the question, and you didn't answer the question. Your lack of support for women is well documented on this and other issues.

Minister, these women should not have to go forward and plead their case before a group of civil servants or persons hand-picked by the minister. You can fill in your own blank, Minister. But you do not in this province ask a woman to say, "I have to explain to some stranger why I think I'm at risk emotionally if I have contact with this other person."

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** You've got a lot of gall talking about women.

**Mr. Jackson:** You should be standing up and defending them, the former minister who did social policy for a while in this province. The fact of the matter is that this legislation violates that simple principle for women in this province. It is unconscionable for a government to stand there and do that to women.

Now, again, as I've said, this does not affect a large number of people, but why would we create a process when we had amendments available to address this issue? The no-contact veto, we believe, will not work. It hasn't worked for women who are the victims of stalkers. Peace bonds and no-contact orders are meaningless in the province of Ontario. In fact, if you call the police to report it, they'll say, "You should leave the premises on which this individual is. We might be able to go and charge them, but at this point, we recommend that you leave." That is the history of no-contact provisions.

We've also indicated that it should include members of the family. Under this legislation it's all right, under a no-contact provision, to go contact the birth mother's husband or brother or sister.

You can play with the statistics all you want, but this legislation, in its current form, falls short of the kinds of protections that Ontarians deserve in order to advance the agenda for adoptees and birth parents in this province so that they can be repatriated, so that they can make matches, so that they can be connected, and so that they can share medical information. With the government withdrawing its support for the province to assist these families, and with families left to fend with this question in court, I feel the legislation will not serve the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** I sat on the committee that heard the hearings on Bill 183. It stuns me to hear some of the non-arguments coming from the other side. The reality is that right now there is no framework for protection in place for either birth mothers or adoptees. What this legislation will do is, in a balanced way, put those protections in place.

We know that there are competing interests in this situation. We understand that, and what this government is doing is deciding on the side of openness for people to have the information that they need to get on with their lives.

We also know that there are many members on the other side who agreed with this bill. They believed that is the right direction. What we are hearing tonight are men who are looking for a reason to vote against this bill because the far right of their party has taken them, has captured them and has convinced them to make misogynist and anti-openness arguments—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** You're making this up.

**Ms. Wynne:** No, I'm not making this up. What I'm doing is saying that the leader of that party agreed with this bill, and he has been taken over by the right wing of his party and he's looking for an excuse to vote against this bill. In my mind, that is not the way we should be doing politics. We should be looking at the merits of an issue and deciding what the balanced view is, and that's not what is happening here. What we hear are opposition members who agreed with openness, agreed that people needed to have information—and, yes, there is a debate about exactly how that should be done. We've put pro-



tections in place. We've put in the no-contact veto. You can get a disclosure veto if harm can be proven.

But openness is what Mr. Tory agreed with, and he has changed his mind because the right wing of his party has decided that that's not the way to go. I think we all have to pay very close attention to that as we move forward, because if we're going to have a debate in this House, we need to know where people stand and where they're going to stand on a balanced issue like this one.

**Mr. Sterling:** I've heard some pretty silly arguments with regard to the motives behind our party and our stand on this particular bill at this juncture. I thought the Leader of the Opposition put very, very forcefully today where our party is on this bill and the reasons, notwithstanding what the member opposite says.

It's odd that every editorial board in Ontario disagrees with this—

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** That's not true, either.

**Mr. Sterling:** Every major one.

**The Speaker:** Minister, you need to withdraw.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I apologize. I withdraw. It's inaccurate, though.

**The Speaker:** Minister, if you want to stay in here—we're not going to do this.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker:** The member for Lanark—Carleton.

**Mr. Sterling:** The tolerance and the arrogance on the other side is really quite unbelievable on a very, very serious subject.

My primary reason for standing was to thank the member from Burlington for his participation in this process. He worked very, very hard during the committee hearings. He knew as much about the bill as any member of the committee. He worked hard to put his amendments together—he put 45 amendments together—and three were successful.

Notwithstanding that, this bill as it stands, as mentioned before, is a mess. That's because virtually every section—probably 80% to 90% of the sections—has been amended by the government, as their policy changed and as we went through the process. That doesn't mean that they are a flexible, listening government; that means that they were confused at the beginning and they are confused now as to where they are going.

I think we owe Mr. Jackson a great debt of gratitude not only for his amendments but for pointing out the number of holes that a truck could drive through with regard to this legislation as it was introduced in this Legislature.

**Mr. Klees:** I also want to thank the member for Burlington for his very reasoned submission to the House and for his work on committee. It was indeed thoughtful. It provoked a great deal of thought, certainly among our own caucus members.

With regard to the comment from the member for Don Valley West, she may well have been a member of that standing committee, but she obviously was not listening. I want to read into the record a comment made by Clayton Ruby in his submission on the issue of contact

veto that she refers to: "A contact veto is much like the stalking laws, the criminal harassment laws. We have them on the books, but each of you in your riding office has heard cases, as I do in my office regularly, of women who say it doesn't work. The police can't enforce it; there's not enough manpower. No one can track down the anonymous phone calls, the late-night visits. That's not an adequate substitute for what privacy is. Privacy is the right to choose whether information about you gets disclosed or not, not just to the world but to anyone other than yourself."

**2000**

These are the very substantive issues that we are attempting to bring forward to this government. As I watch and as I listen, I'm dismayed at their inability to grasp this one fundamental concept, and that is the concept of fairness to that small minority of people who have serious concerns about the impact of this legislation on their lives. We'll continue to do what we can to the closing hours of this debate to try to get the government to understand this important issue.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph—Wellington):** I'm glad that the word "fairness" was just mentioned, because one of the things which has always been a bit of a mystery to me in this debate is the fact that we can talk about being fair to the mother and to the birth father and to the adoptive parents, but what we rarely seem to talk about is fairness to the actual adoptee, to the baby. The baby was not a party to any agreement to seal the records. The baby had no way of saying, "Eighteen years from now, I might like to know what's going on." The baby was not a party to the agreement; it couldn't have been. So what we are trying to do is to say that the baby, who's now an adult, has some rights in this equation as well. We need to be fair to everyone.

I'd also like to tell you a story about a friend of mine, who didn't know that she was adopted until one day somebody showed up at her door and said, "Hi, I'm your birth sister." Now, as it turned out, she was ecstatic to find that she had this whole family. It sorted out a whole bunch of things that she'd never understood.

The point is that in the current regime under which we live in Ontario, the records aren't really sealed anyway because anybody can show up on anybody's doorstep and say, "Hi." Even if the scheme isn't 100% perfect, even if some of Clayton Ruby's theories are borne out, we will at least have a mechanism which we have never had before for people to indicate who wants to be contacted and who doesn't want to be contacted. This is a vast improvement over the current regime.

**The Speaker:** Response? The member for Burlington.

**Mr. Jackson:** I want to thank everyone who has participated in this debate. I want to put on the record for Ms. Churley from Toronto—Danforth how much I admire the work she has done in this area. Like in all causes, it takes individual champions to move the agenda.

What I find difficult is that, when faced with opportunities to make some amendments that would have made this bill better, made it more like the New South Wales



example, they were stonewalled and there was a fear that they would appear weak as a government if they did any simple amendments, like retaining the option to provide counselling. Now you're going to have to go and beg twice; you've got to ask, "Can I get some support here?"

I could go on with more issues that I thought could have been approved. So I feel badly that this legislation will get a legal challenge, and the challenges are not going to come, as the member for Wellington has raised, from birth mothers; they're going to come from adoptees. That's who's here today in the House, an adoptee, a child adoptee. That's who Clayton Ruby is representing: a child adoptee. These are the ones who are indicating that their rights are being so severely violated.

I just simply want to close and thank all members of the House, even the House leaders, for providing some additional time for public hearings. However, adding more time to public hearings is meaningless if it doesn't result in at least some outward demonstration that we have learned something additionally and we have amended this legislation. My fear is, that did not occur.

**The Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Klees:** It will come as no surprise to anyone in this House that I am opposed to this bill. And in the time I have available to me, I will, for the public record, state my reasons. I will provide some practical examples of the harm this legislation will bring to innocent citizens in this province, and I'll attempt to impress upon my colleagues in this House the far-reaching implications of the proposed legislation on the principle of fundamental justice guaranteed in our country's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Honourable members who have heard me speak in this Legislature before, and in my remarks that I have made in past debates on this legislation specifically, will know that I am intimately familiar with the adoption process. My son, who is 23 years of age, was adopted as an infant. He has been aware of his adoption from the time that he was able to read, because we spoke to him about adoption. He was aware that he was a chosen child, and he was given every opportunity to feel very much a part of our family. There is no difference between my feelings as a father toward my son and the feelings I have toward my daughter, who is my daughter by birth. My wife and her three siblings are all adopted, and my wife went through the reunion process with her birth mother.

So I think I have a good sense of, first of all, what the practical challenges are of reunion, because my wife went through that process. I have a good sense of the fact that that process needed to have some improvement, that there were some unnecessary delays and that there were some areas of that process that clearly, as with any other process, can stand improvement. I also am very familiar with the emotional stress that one goes through wondering about one's past, wondering about one's roots and having a desire to make that connection.

I speak to this legislation, not from a theoretical perspective, not from a strictly legal perspective, but I have that first-hand, practical knowledge of the process.

Lest there be those who charge that my personal experience should be set aside in the interest of a more objective assessment of this proposed legislation, I also bring to this debate the appeals of a long list of constituents who have brought their concerns to my attention over the last number of years since I've been a member of the Legislature, and especially more recently, as this legislation was tabled in the House.

In addition to that, I also participated in the public hearings, and I also heard the appeals coming before the standing committee of this Legislature on behalf of those who were advocating in favour, as well as those who appealed to the Legislature to please take into consideration their personal circumstances and their right to privacy. That right to privacy is a right that every citizen of this country has. It is a right that they have under legislation, under the evolving common law in this province and under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**2010**

So I oppose this legislation for the following reasons: First and foremost, it offends the right of privacy and for that reason alone should be rebuffed by this Legislature. In the three other provinces in this country where retroactive legislation has been adopted and placed on the books, all three of those provinces provide for a disclosure veto, and there's a reason for that. The reason, I submit to you, that British Columbia and Alberta and Newfoundland have done so is because they in their deliberations found out very clearly that it is in fact an issue that would face a charter challenge and that the legislation they were bringing forward would not serve the very people who were advocating for it because, as my colleague had said earlier, this legislation will be challenged. The challenge will be taken to the Supreme Court, and during that entire period of time, the very people who are seeking the kinds of reunions they were hoping to have under the legislation will not be able to because of the ongoing challenge.

I want to commend Ms. Ann Cavoukian, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, for her strong stand in opposition to this bill in its present form. She, as an independent, impartial officer of this Legislature, has expressed her opinion that not to adopt a disclosure veto for past adoptions "would be to ignore the wishes of an entire segment of society: birth parents and adopted persons who were once promised privacy, who still want it and who have governed their entire lives according to that assurance." That quote is taken from Hansard, Wednesday, May 18, 2005.

In a letter to the National Post dated June 16, 2005, the privacy commissioner stated the following: "It is clear that since 1927 the statutory framework in Ontario has been predicated on confidentiality. In reliance on this statutory framework, at a minimum, there was a clear understanding or social contract that created an expectation of privacy and confidentiality to many of the parties involved. Such agreements should not be revoked retroactively."



In his submission to the standing committee on social policy on May 18, 2005, Clayton Ruby supported Ms. Cavoukian and her call for a disclosure veto. I quote Mr. Ruby: "It's required because the Constitution of this country in its Charter of Rights requires it...." He went on to explain that there are three aspects to this. I will again quote Mr. Ruby: "[T]he Constitution guarantees fundamental justice and what's called 'security of the person.'" He referred to a recent Supreme Court decision that records that are of an intensely personal nature must be entitled to a constitutional right to protection.

Mr. Ruby referred to section 8 of the charter, under which a Canadian citizen can expect privacy rights created by previous legislative schemes where people had an expectation that this kind of information would, in fact, be kept private. Mr. Ruby made the statement very clearly: "That creates a right of privacy." I agree.

To that end, let me read from the health and law privacy and access to information sections of the Ontario Bar Association submission to the standing committee, dated September 13, 2005. In their submission, Mark Hayes, the chair of the OBA privacy section, and Lonny J. Rosen, chair of the OBA health law section, refer to the committee the long-established privacy expectations as reflected in the current Child and Family Services Act, which states in subsection 165(1):

"Despite any other act, after an adoption order is made, no person shall ... permit the inspection ... of information that relates to the adoption and is kept,

"(a) by the ministry;

"(b) by a society or a licensee; or

"(c) in the adoption disclosure register."

This is in our current statute. There is a very clear expectation, and there was and has been a very clear expectation on the part of individuals who entered into an adoption arrangement in this province, that those records would be kept sealed.

I oppose this legislation because, by allowing it to be enacted, I believe it will be contributing further to an already existing constant erosion of trust and confidence in government. This effect goes beyond those currently affected by this legislation. If government can, by its simple will, in response to a lobby from a very focused group, introduce legislation that by the stroke of a pen will rob individuals within our society of confidential and very sensitive personal information, what is next? What can citizens of this province, what can Canadians believe and trust will be kept confidential? I believe that what happens to this legislation is indeed fundamental to life as we know it in this province and in this country, and that's the reason that this legislation will be challenged in the courts, and so it should be.

I want to say again that I will be the first to support the importance of opening up records, of ensuring that adoptees and adoptive parents and parties to the adoption have the right of timely access to information. However, what I will stand firm on is the insistence that the right to privacy of Ontario citizens be protected and that there should be a disclosure veto in this legislation as there is

in the legislation in the other three provinces that have brought similar legislation forward. That is all we're asking for. I do not understand the minister's insistence on moving forward without that fundamental issue being considered.

I'm opposed to this legislation because of the human tragedy that it will bring to families. I look at the people in the gallery and I find it puzzling that when statements like this are being made, there is a sense that somehow we just don't get it. I ask them, and I ask members in this House, to simply place yourself into the shoes, into the circumstances and into the lives of the men and women who indeed have serious emotional issues with what this bill proposes, and to put aside, perhaps, for one moment—just for one moment—the incredible work that you have been doing in the interest of opening up disclosure and just give one morsel of consideration to people who are human beings who are deathly afraid of the consequences to their lives. Can you not accommodate them? Can you not accommodate them for their concerns, for their emotional concerns? I would expect that in the interest of humanity we would allow that to happen. As was said before, only 3% of individuals in other jurisdictions where the disclosure veto is in place exercised that. That, I believe, would be indicative of a responsible public policy. That's not what we have here.

**2020**

I'm concerned that some of my colleagues seem to know very little about this issue, and yet they'll be voting on it. I hear colleagues stand up, even in their debate, and say, "What about the rights of adoptees?" The member from Guelph-Wellington stood up in her response and said, "It's fine to protect the rights of adults. What about adoptees, the children who had nothing to say about what happened at the time of the adoption?"

Let me read just one example of someone who is an adoptee, the kind of person that the member from Guelph-Wellington was speaking about. In her letter to me, she said:

"Dear Mr. Klees,

"I'm writing to you today to thank you for your efforts in the House today to protect my rights as an adoptee. I was adopted at birth because of the death of three older siblings at the hands of my natural parents. To be very honest, the fact that my personal information could be released to these people without my permission terrifies me."

What is it that causes us to ignore the plight of people like this?

I see the lady in the gallery. She's been laughing through this entire thing. I tell you honestly that this is not a laughing matter for any of us, whether we're observing this either here in the galleries or at home on the television, or whether we're members here. The reality is—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Klees:** No, the reality is that this is very, very serious. We have a responsibility in this Legislature to



ensure that we are not representing just those who perhaps have been lobbying for this kind of legislation for many years—and to their credit, they have come a long way; in this legislation they have what they have been lobbying for—but simply advocating on behalf of a minority of people in this province who have serious issues with this legislation. We are asking that this government take their plight into consideration, apart from the legal issues, apart from the issues that relate to fundamental privacy rights that all of us have come to expect would be a natural right in this province.

This government is ignoring that appeal. They have the right, and they have the numbers; this legislation will pass. They've had all kinds of opportunities to consider submissions from some of the brightest legal minds in this country. They have had an opportunity to hear from those who are weak in their circumstances, and people who don't have the ability to organize because, by even expressing their concerns, they would be exposing themselves and exposing their circumstances.

The only people they have to advocate for them is us. And we're not saying that the entire legislation should be thrown out; we're simply saying, "Give us one amendment."

I want to close by making an appeal to this government one last time, and that is, very simply, to respond to the challenge from an officer of this Legislature: Ann Cavoukian. In her submission, she has asked for one thing and one thing only: to allow the principle of fairness and equality to shine through this legislation. There's only one way to do that, and that is, to make room in this legislation for a disclosure veto because, in that sense, you will recognize the fairness to those people who have serious concerns and who would be harmed by this legislation; equality, because it puts that minority on the same footing as those people who have been advocating for the openness that we see in this legislation.

Fairness and equality: two principles that should be in every piece of legislation that this Legislature passes. It's missing in this legislation and, for that reason, I will be opposing this legislation when it comes to a vote.

**The Speaker:** Questions or comments?

**Mr. Kormos:** Very briefly, because I am anticipating that this debate is coming to an end. I want to apologize to the staff at the Legislative Assembly because this is Halloween and a whole lot of those folks might have wanted to spend time with their kids or with kids in the neighbourhood—

**Ms. Churley:** Or our grandchildren.

**Mr. Kormos:** —or their grandkids.

So I apologize to them for us—we in the chamber, compelling them to work on an evening that many of them would have otherwise spent with their kids. But sometimes these things happen. We'll try to make sure it doesn't down the road.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** What was really important about this last speaker—and I have to give him full marks. I believe that he is genuinely concerned about individuals

who may come to harm while we in Ontario are changing social policy. This is really important for all of us to acknowledge.

I am obviously voting in favour of this bill. I support this legislation; I want to see this happen. We have to be very respectful of individuals who may come to harm because of it. That is why we have spent an inordinate amount of time. We have gone out of our way to be sure that the legislation is balanced. All of the work is going to begin when we do our regulatory work, and the members opposite know this. I have given this commitment to the Leader of the Opposition personally on numerous occasions, that we will have him sit down with us and tell us what he would like to see in regulations, albeit, yes, it won't be a disclosure veto. I acknowledge that. You cannot have, *carte blanche*, disclosure vetoes because people feel like it. Every time you have one of those, there is an adult on the other side of that equation who has been denied rights to their information for a long, long time, and we have to right that balance. We've got to bring balance to this issue.

We have said that we will have a board, who will be experts—not you and I, legislators who are going to determine these personal issues for people, but people we will appoint who will be good at this job, to bring balance to the right to maintain and receive a disclosure veto, where appropriate. We have suggested repeatedly that we are prepared to work with opposition members, members of the public, many of whom we've already started working with in these discussions about what all of those systems would look like, and it's important to acknowledge this.

We are going to have a bill that has balance. I hope it will be a law that is going to bring balance. It is about the right to know; it is not about the right to a relationship. We will insist on this as we move forward from here on.

**Mr. Sterling:** The question is about balance, a balance between what we have promised people in the past with regard to our laws, our processes, and what we are going to allow now and into the future. The arguments put forward by the government side that this is an equitable balance don't, I think, stand the test. That has been proven by the fact, as the member has indicated, that every privacy commissioner from across Canada, including the federal privacy commissioner, and every major editorial board has condemned this piece of legislation as not being a fair balance. And virtually every lawyer who has appeared in front of the committee, every legal expert, every law school, has said, "You can't do this. This is not fair to our system."

**2030**

We heard a lot about the adoptees being very anxious for this information, and that is true. I believe that the majority of reunions will be happy. I would hope that the greatest number of them will be happy, but there are reunions that are not happy; there are family situations which are not very nice. To say to people who have relied upon the law in the past, to say to them now, "We're going to pull the rug from underneath you, even



though you made a decision 10, 20, five years or one year ago, with regard to your conduct." It just doesn't muster. It's unfortunate: The government had a chance to go forward with this legislation. I just don't think it will stand the test of time.

**Ms. Churley:** Because this may be the last time I'm going to speak in this place about this bill, because I understand that the last speaker has spoken from the Conservative Party—am I wrong on that?

**Mr. Dunlop:** No.

**Ms. Churley:** And I did miss trick-or-treating with my grandchildren tonight. I, too, apologize to any of the table officers and—

**Mr. Kormos:** All over the building.

**Ms. Churley:** All over the building—who missed going out with their children for Halloween tonight, but this is an important bill that we're debating here.

I want to talk a bit about the legal aspect, and you can imagine that I looked into it and had a legal opinion. Granted, so be it, if there is a legal challenge; that's what democracy is all about. But you have to understand that 30 years of legal and social policy research and analysis about the adoption regime in Ontario has repeatedly demonstrated that confidentiality was never ensured, and that's the basic background to this.

Remember the Garber commission, which was put in place by a previous Conservative government, who recommended in the 1970s and the 1980s that adoption records be opened up? Mr. Garber, who was put in by a previous Bill Davis government, said: "Although in earlier times adoption workers may have assured their clients that secrecy would be maintained forever, in fact, there was never any such contract or agreement in law between the government and the participants to adoption."

Based on these findings, introducing a disclosure veto could be seen as putting into practice a regime that never existed in the first place. If that's going to be challenged in the courts, so be it: It will be an interesting outcome. But the reality of this situation is that those rights never existed, whether you like it or not. What we're doing here is correcting a wrong and making it right.

**The Speaker:** Response?

**Mr. Klees:** I want to use the final closing minutes to read the following quotes from Ann Cavoukian, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario: "My proposal of a simple disclosure veto for past adoptions will still permit the new law to operate retroactively,

while protecting the privacy rights of those who have relied on previous assurances of confidentiality and who have led their entire lives based on those assurances. This is a model that takes into account the views of all parties involved, not just those seeking access to their records. We must strike a fair balance."

That fair balance is what the leader of the official opposition was arguing for today; it is what Mr. Jackson was advocating; it is what Mr. Sterling has been advocating, leading the charge within our caucus; and it is what I attempted to bring forward in the course of my debate. I sincerely regret the posturing and the position that this government has taken. I believe that time will prove us right. I hope that the harm will be minimized as a result of the legal challenge that I intend to support, because fundamentally, if this Legislature fails a minority of people in our province, then we have a responsibility—I have a responsibility—to do what I can as an individual, and resort to the legal system in our country, and appeal, if necessary, to the Supreme Court of Canada to ensure that this legislation does not ever become fully enacted in this province.

**The Speaker:** Further debate? Reply?

Ms. Pupatello has moved third reading of Bill 183, An Act respecting the disclosure of information and records to adopted persons and birth parents. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This will be a 30-minute bell. Call in the members.

I have received a letter from the chief government whip which says, "Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion by Ms. Pupatello for third reading of Bill 183, An Act respecting the disclosure of information and records to adopted persons and birth parents, be deferred until Tuesday, November 1."

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

*The House adjourned at 2036.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Huron-Brace	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement t	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)



Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stormont-Dundas- Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	North / Thunder Bay-Superior- Nord	
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)</b> Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b> Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b> Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Ottawa-Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Ottawa-Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)</b> Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Parkdale-High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Waterloo-Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Perth-Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Windsor-St. Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b> Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)</b> Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Yakubski, John (PC)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph (L)</b> Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Vacant
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L)</b> Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse		
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		
Scarborough-Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)</b> Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L)</b> Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

## CONTENTS

Monday 31 October 2005

### THIRD READINGS

#### **Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005, Bill 183, Ms. Papatello**

Ms. Churley.....	569, 575, 583
Mr. Tory .....	570
Mr. Kormos .....	573, 582
Mr. Sterling .....	575, 579, 582
Mrs. Bountrogianni .....	575
Mr. Klees.....	576, 579, 580, 583
Mr. Jackson .....	576, 579
Ms. Wynne .....	578
Mrs. Sandals.....	579
Ms. Papatello.....	582
Vote deferred.....	583

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 31 octobre 2005

### TROISIÈME LECTURE

#### **Loi de 2005 sur la divulgation de renseignements sur les adoptions, projet de loi 183, *M<sup>me</sup> Papatello***

Vote différé .....	583
--------------------	-----













